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MRS. BERNARD-BEERE.

'O joy for the Promise of May, of May,
O joy for the Promise of May.'
'THE PROMISE OF MAY.'

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN SPECIALLY FOR 'THE THEATRE' BY
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THE THEATRE.

A Monthly Review

OF

THE DRAMA, MUSIC, AND THE FINE ARTS.

EDITED BY

CLEMENT SCOTT.

NEW SERIES.

VOL. I. JANUARY TO JUNE, 1883.

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THE THEATRE.

January, 1883.

Pantomimic Families.

By Dutton Cook.

THERE are family callings as there are family complaints. Physical qualities are hereditary, and why should not mental peculiarities descend in like manner from sire to son? But, of course, accident counts for something in the matter. The chance that makes a man a successful cheesemonger, for instance, tends to the conversion also of his offspring into thriving followers of that useful if unromantic trade. Parents bring up their children not merely in the way that they should go, but also in the way that their progenitors have gone before them. The young avail themselves of the "openings in life," as they are called, which the elders, their ancestors, have effected for them at an earlier date; and so certain arts, crafts, and callings, are carried on prosperously and uninterruptedly from generation to generation.

The profession of the stage often presents itself in the light of a hereditament; and it is especially among the pantomimic members of the great theatrical family that this fact may be observed. The pedigrees of clowns have not, perhaps, been very closely considered by heralds and genealogists; the family trees of Jack Pudding and Mr. Merriman, perfect in all their branches, with exhibition of the ties uniting the parent stock to the foreign houses of Zany and Scaramouch, have not been carefully delineated and preserved; but there can be no difficulty in citing many instances of the descent of pantomimic ability, of the clown becoming the father of clowns, and generally of a sort of genius for harlequinade running through a family. Imagination might picture the typical clown-father of advanced age, instructing his

progeny in the traditions of his profession, giving them the benefits of his experience. Should Providence have blessed him with a full quiver, it would behove him to explain to his brood that all of them must not hope to be clowns; the daughters of his house would, of course, be columbines, or those supernumerary characters of late invention known as "harlequinas;" the eldest son, perhaps, with due regard to the English law of primogeniture, would be appointed to succeed his sire as clown, wearing after him his ample pockets, his stripes and spots, clocked stockings, and fantastic head gear; the younger boys must be content to figure as harlequins, or as pantaloons, or as those skilled contortionists usually called sprites. In old fashioned pantomimes a character called "The Lover" was wont to appear, but this personage has not of late years been seen in the theatre.

Pantomimes are not what once they were, however. One need not be much of a sigher over the past, a sneerer at the present, to arrive at that opinion. What are now called pantomimes are chiefly remarkable for the absence of pantomimists. Like the woods, the clowns decay, the clowns decay and fall. Who can now be found to write of clowns as Charles Dickens wrote of them more than forty years ago in his "Life of Grimaldi?" Even the book itself is no longer retained on the established list of its author's works. Yet clearly the "Life of Grimaldi," as any one may discover who turns over its pages but for a little while, owed much of its value and of its power to entertain, to the skill in arrangement, the narrative art, the painstaking of Charles Dickens. "It is now some years," he wrote, "since we first conceived a strong veneration for clowns, and an intense anxiety to know what they did for themselves out of pantomime time, and off the stage. As a child we were accustomed to pester our relations and friends with questions out of number concerning these gentry. Whether their appetite for sausages and such like wares was always the same, and if so at whose expense they were maintained; whether they were ever taken up for pilfering other people's goods, or were forgiven by everybody because it was only done in fun; how it was they got such beautiful complexions, and where they lived; and whether they were born clowns or gradually turned into clowns as they grew up. On these and a thousand other points our curiosity was insatiable." When he learnt that the departed clown Grimaldi had left some memoirs of his

life behind him, the editor confessed himself "in a perfect fever until he had perused the manuscript." Finally he accepted a proposal from Mr. Bentley, the publisher, that he should edit the book, and this task he accomplished, "altering the form of the work throughout, and making such other alterations as he conceived would improve the narration of the facts without any departure from the facts themselves."

His biographer states that Joseph Grimaldi's paternal grandfather was well known both to the French and Italian public as an admirable dancer, who obtained the appellation or alias of "Iron Legs," because of his untiring energy and singular agility. It is believed, however, that error has crept into this account; that of the grandfather of Joseph nothing is really known, and that "Iron Legs" was in truth the father and not the grandfather of the famous English clown. Guiseppe Grimaldi, otherwise "Iron Legs," was a dancer and pantomimist, appearing at the fairs of France and Italy. His first employment in England was as a ballet dancer at the King's Theatre, the Italian Opera House in the Haymarket. In 1758 Signor Grimaldi made his first appearance on the English stage at Drury Lane, under Garrick's management, in "a new pantomime dance" entitled "The Millers." From that time until his death, thirty years later, Signor Grimaldi continued to be a member of the Drury Lane corps de ballet, appearing as harlequin, clown, pantaloon, "Cherokee," or in any character he might be required to assume. In the summer months, until the close of the season of 1767, the Signor performed like duties at Sadler's Wells—Drury Lane was then only open in the winter. The anecdotes of Guiseppe Grimaldi always represent him as speaking broken English.

The famous Joseph, Joe, or Joey, as his public loved to call him, was born in Clare Market in 1778. Before he was three years old he was introduced to the audiences of Sadler's Wells by his father Guiseppe. The play bill for Easter Monday, 1781, announced that among other entertainments there would be "dancing by Master and Miss Grimaldi." In the following year the youthful Joey made his first appearance at Drury Lane in the Christmas pantomime of "The Triumph of Mirth; or, Harlequin's Wedding," the characters of pantaloon and clown being played probably by the elder Grimaldi and Delphini. It may be noted that the Easter Monday which witnessed the first efforts of Joey at

Sadler's Wells saw also the first performance there of a famous funambulist known as Paulo Redigé, "Le Petit Diable," who afterwards married "La Belle Espagnole," a young lady described in the bills as "celebrated at Paris all the winter for her very elegant and wonderful performances" upon the tight rope. Of the child resulting from this union much was to be expected. The son of "Le Petit Diable" and "La Belle Espagnole" was born almost within the walls of Sadler's Wells, and became known to fame as Signor Paulo, a very popular clown for many years.

Master Grimaldi distinguished himself as a dancer and as a representative of cats and monkeys, and the imps and gnomes of pantomimes. In 1798 the Sadler's Wells playbills first conferred upon the lad the title of "Mister" Grimaldi. In 1799 he was sustaining the arduous character of Punch and Clown in the Drury Lane pantomime of "Harlequin Amulet; or, the Magic of Mona." It was on this occasion that Mr. James Byrne, the harlequin, introduced the closely-fitting spangled dress, which harlequins have since continued to wear. The earlier harlequins had been content with the loose patchwork jacket and trousers worn by the pantomime figures in Watteau's pictures. The Byrnes were a dancing family, famed for their exertions in ballet and pantomime, but they did not condescend to the characters of clown and pantaloon apparently. James Byrne, the harlequin, had been one of the ballet at Drury Lane in Garrick's time, and survived until 1845. He was the father of the well-remembered contriver of ballets, Oscar Byrne, whose christian name was due, it is said, to parental success in the Ossianic ballet of "Oscar and Malvinia." Mrs. Byrne, the wife of James, was also a dancer, and other members of the family similarly occupied themselves. In my youth I remember accomplishing my first dancing steps under the direction of a Mr. James Byrne—a son of the harlequin's probably — a very animated dancing-master, who wore many waistcoats of various colours, and always carried a miniature fiddle called a "kit"—as though a full-sized fiddle should be styled a "cat"—in the swallow-tail pocket of his dress coat.

Joseph Grimaldi's progress need not be further recounted. His clown was probably founded upon his father's method of playing the part. This was no doubt sufficiently marked, for a certain Mr. West, who in 1796 was clown at Astley's in the pantomime of "The Magician of the Rocks; or, Harlequin in London," publicly

announced that he played the part "after the manner of his old master Grimaldi." "I knew your father well," said the Duke of York to Joseph Grimaldi at the Theatrical Fund Dinner of 1824, "he was a funny man, and taught me and some of my sisters to dance." But for a certain originality and abundance of humour, the clown of Joseph Grimaldi seems to have been something very exceptional. "The general droll," writes his biographer, "the grimacing, filching, irresistible clown left the stage with him, and though often heard of has never since been seen."

Grimaldi's son, who also bore the name of Joseph, first appeared at Sadler's Wells in 1814, playing Man Friday to his father's Robinson Crusoe. The boy was only twelve years old at this time, but Grimaldi entertained the highest opinion of his abilities. His conviction was that if young Joe "had been only moderate and temperate in the commonest degree, he must in a few years have equalled if not greatly excelled anything which his father had achieved in his very best days." In 1815 young Joe was engaged at Covent Garden personating "Chittique, a little-footed Chinese Empress with a big body, afterwards Clowny-chip"—probably a diminutive clown—in the pantomine of "Harlequin and Fortunio." He was also described as "an admirable lover of the Dandy kind" when he appeared as Adonis Fribble in "Harlequin and Friar Bacon." During some years the father and son played together in various pantomimes. But it soon became apparent that young Joe had entered upon desperately vicious courses. It was supposed that in some drunken brawl he had received a severe blow upon the head from a constable's staff, and that he never really recovered from the effects of the wound. "He became a wild and furious savage; he was frequently attacked with dreadful fits of epilepsy, and continually committed actions which nothing but insanity could prompt. In 1828 he had a decided attack of insanity, and was confined in a strait-waistcoat in his father's house for some time." The stroller's tale in "Pickwick"—setting forth certain incidents in the life of a sottish clown—was probably suggested by the story of Grimaldi's son. Many opportunities were offered the young man; the public welcomed him most cordially, both for his father's sake and his own: as a pantomimist he was most ingenious and accomplished, and his clown—he first assumed the character in 1823—was received with extraordinary applause. But his dissolute habits led to his

forfeiting engagement after engagement. He was dismissed for drunkenness from Drury Lane, Sadler's Wells, the Pavilion, and the Surrey Theatre in turn. "He fell into the lowest state of wretchedness and poverty. His dress had fallen to rags, his feet were thrust into two worn-out slippers, his face was pale with disease and squalid with dirt and want, and he was steeped in degradation." He died in 1832 at a public house in Pitt Street, Tottenham Court Road. "It was proved before the coroner that he died in a state of wild and furious madness. Rising from his bed and dressing himself in stage costume to act sketches of the parts to which he had been most accustomed, and requiring to be held down to die by strong manual force." Joseph Grimaldi, the father, the last of his race, died in 1837.

Pietro Bologna—the countryman and friend of Guiseppe Grimaldi, made his first appearance in England at Sadler's Wells in 1786, as "Clown to the Rope." Signor Bologna brought with him from Geron his wife, two sons and a daughter—all mimes, posture-makers, dancers and funambulists—a complete pantomimic family, in fact. At Sadler's Wells in 1792 the bills announced "Extraordinary Exhibitions of Postures and Feats of Strength by Signor Bologna and his children." At Jones's Royal Circus in 1795 the family appeared in a pantomime called "The Magic Feast;" Signor Bologna was the pantaloon, his wife undertook the part of a fishwoman, and his son, John Peter Bologna, long professionally distinguished as "Jack Bologna" danced as harlequin. During many years Jack Bologna was harlequin to Grimaldi's clown both at Covent Garden and Sadler's Wells. The two famous pantomimists became indeed allied by marriage, for Jack Bologna it seems took to wife, Louisa Maria Bristow, the sister of Grimaldi's second partner, Mary Bristow, the mother of the dissolute young Joe. A young Bologna—he may have been a son of Jack's—was an accepted harlequin at many of our theatres during the last thirty years. In the course of that period there also flourished a Mr. Paulo—he was a member of Charles Kean's company at the Princess's Theatre, and appeared as pantaloon in many pantomimes—was he a son of that Signor Paulo the clown who was born of the marriage of "Le Petit Diable" and "La Belle Espagnole"? Barnes, an admired pantaloon in Grimaldi's time, left I think, a pantomimic descendant or two. There seems to have been but one "Tom Ellar," however—long accounted an excellent

harlequin—who first essayed that part in London at the Royalty Theatre, Goodman's Fields, in 1808. He was harlequin at Covent Garden in 1813, and during many subsequent seasons. The close of his career was sad enough. He is curiously mentioned in a critical paper by Thackeray, written in 1840. "Tom, who comes bounding home from school, has the doctor's account in his trunk, and his father goes to sleep at the pantomime to which he takes him. *Pater infelix*, you, too, have laughed at clown, and the magic wand of spangled harlequin: what delightful enchantment did it wave around you in the golden days 'when George the Third was King'! But our clown lies in his grave; and our harlequin, Ellar, prince of our many enchanted islands, was he not at Bow Street the other day in his dirty, tattered, faded motley—seized as a lawbreaker, for acting at a penny theatre, after having well nigh starved in the streets where nobody would listen to his old guitar? No one gave a shilling to bless him: not one of us who owe him so much!" So passes the glory of harlequins. Years ago when those who are now middle-aged and something more were boys in jackets, penny portraits of Mr. Ellar "in his favourite character of harlequin" were wont to be published by Mr. Skelt or by Mr. Park, of Long Lane, Smithfield, for the youth of that remote period to "tinsel." Where now is Skelt? and what has become of Park? The boys of to-day know not Ellar and do not condescend to "tinsel." Indeed I conceive that "tinselling" has now to be numbered among the lost arts—lost and contemmed.

Grimaldi is a sort of connecting link with many pantomimic families. In the summer of 1822 he played clown for four weeks at the Coburg Theatre, under the management of Mr. Glossop. The harlequin was Mr. Howell, long famed for his agility, the pantaloon was Mr. Barnes; the lover was Mr. Widdicomb, so admired at Astley's in later times as the riding master; and the columbine was Madame Leclercq. This lady was no doubt an ancestress of the excellent actresses, Rose and Carlotta Leclercq—the last-named being Mr. Charles Kean's columbine in the seasons of 1850–1–2—and of the brothers Arthur and Charles Leclercq, who were wont to appear as clown and harlequin when Mr. Buckstone produced pantomimes at the Haymarket. Time out of mind indeed the Leclercqs have been a family of mimics, dancers, and posturers. In 1807, when Grimaldi was playing clown at Sadler's Wells in a pantomime called "Jan Ben Jan; or,

Harlequin and the Forty Virgins," Jack Bologna having seceded from the theatre, Mr. Ridgway made his first appearance as harlequin. In 1828, on the occasion of Grimaldi's farewell benefit, Mr. Ridgway and his two sons lent their assistance. The Ridgways were an esteemed pantomimic family. Tom Ridgway was a most excellent clown in the days of Madame Vestris's direction of Covent Garden, and he survived to help Mr. Phelps at Sadler's Wells during a season or two. There have been pantomimic Bradburys, since Grimaldi's great rival, the tumbling contortionist clown Bradbury, who wore nine strong "pads" upon his person—one on his head, one round the shoulders, one round the hips, one on each elbow, two on the knees, and two on the heels of his shoes, and thus equipped was wont to hurl and knock himself about in a most alarming manner. He was, from all accounts, an original and surprising clown, but not especially comical.

There was a pantomimic family named Gomery or Montgomery—that Reverend Robert who wrote poetically of "Satan," and whom Macaulay so lashed and so enjoyed lashing, was said to be a scion of the house. The Paynes, of course, are freshly remembered. "Harry" is extant, a very popular clown. "Fred"—the pantomimists are always awarded "pet" or abbreviated names—was a very elegant harlequin; while their parent, "Old Billy" Payne, owned a perfect genius for pantomimic acting. He was not accustomed to figure in the harlequinade or "comic scenes," however; his efforts—they were grandly grotesque, and prodigiously comical—were confined to the "openings" of pantomimes. He was a thoroughly original and most humorous artist, and had served his public diligently and faithfully during a long course of years. In his youth, when not required to appear in comic pantomime or serious ballet, he could assume small parts successfully, even in the legitimate drama. He was the Ludovico who, in 1833, helped from the stage of Covent Garden the dying Edmund Kean, when, for the last time, he wore the Oriental costume and the black complexion of Othello. Are the Marshalls forgotten? Joseph and Harry played harlequin and clown many nights at the Haymarket in 1853 and later years; they were skilled dancers and violinists, moreover, and won much applause by the variety of their accomplishments. Harry, a droll clown—his sepulchral or "churchyard" tone of voice notwithstanding—first

distinguished himself as the Green Dog in Planché's "King of the Peacocks," produced by Madame Vestris at the Lyceum. Polly, the sister of Joseph and Harry, was accepted during many seasons as a lively actress and a clever dancer at the Strand Theatre. Quite in her girlhood she had been one of the best of Pucks ever seen, in a revival of "The Midsummer Night's Dream," under Mr. Maddox's management of the Princess's Theatre. The Brothers Stilt—Charles and Richard—were much valued as clown and sprite. Richard was a most amazing contortionist at Sadler's Wells, in Mr. Phelps' time, when Mr. Charles Fenton danced as harlequin, and Miss Caroline Parkes as columbine. At that period there flourished also a Deulin family—perhaps they were really British Dowlings, who had Frenchified their name. The head of the house, indeed, as though claiming also to be both German and Italian, styled himself Herr Nicolo Deulin.

The most original clown since Grimaldi was no doubt Richard Flexmore—very famous thirty years ago—who discovered for himself an entirely new method of representing the character of clown. Flexmore married a charming dancer, the daughter of Auriol, the happiest clown the Parisian Cirque has ever boasted. From this interesting union a phenomenal race of pantomimists might have been expected, but poor Richard died *sine prole*, I believe. Other pantomimic families might be enumerated, especially a Ravel family, very popular during many years in the United States. Then we are brought to existing families or troupes—the Lauris, the Martinettis, and other genuine and admirable pantomimists—still cherishing the precious traditions of harlequinade, and counting amongst them skilled personators of harlequin and columbine, clown and pantaloon. The Vokeses and the Girards are families or combinations of a later organization or development. They are grotesque singers and dancers, eccentric of posture and gesticulation, and highly accomplished and genial in their way—which is not, however, the way of pantomime proper, as it was understood by the Grimaldi generations. There is not, I think, a Christmas clown or even a pantaloon among them.

Ticket o' Leave.

A VILLAGE DRAMA.

By George R. Sims.

WHO'S getting married this morning—some o' the big folk? No!
Leastways not as you'd call such as now-a-days big folks go.
It's only a common wedding—old Bradley's daughter Eve
Is a-saying "I will" in yonder, and the bridegroom's "Ticket o' Leave."

You thought 'twas a big folk's wedding, because o' the crowd may be.
Well, it's one as the whole o' the village has come to the church to see.
You needn't say you're a stranger; if you wasn't you'd know their tale,
For to find another as didn't you might search ten mile and fail.

"Ticket o' Leave" did I call him?—I did, Sir, and all round here,
"Ticket o' Leave" we've called him for as nigh as may be a year.
For he came back here from a prison—this is his native place,
And that was the jibe as his neighbours flung in his haggard face.

It's ten year ago since it happened—that as brought all the shame,
That as gave decent people the right to shrink at his name.
He was right-hand man to old Bradley, was Ned—that is, "Ticket o' Leave,"
He was more like a son to the farmer, and he loved his daughter Eve.

Eve was the village beauty, with half the lads at her feet,
But she only gave 'em the chaff, Sir,—it was Ned as got all the wheat.
They were sweethearts trothed and plighted, for old Bradley was nothing loth,
He had kissed the girl when she told him, and promised to help them both.

But Jack, his son, was his idol—a racketty, scapegrace lad—
Though to speak e'er a word agen him was to drive the old chap mad.
He worshipped the boy, God help him—the dearest to him on earth—
The wife of his early manhood had died in giving him birth.

To him Jack was just an angel, but over the village ale
The gossips who knew his capers could tell a different tale.
There were whispers of worse than folly: of drunken bouts and of debts,
And of company Jack was keeping, into which it was bad to get.

Ned heard it all at the alehouse, smoking his pipe one night,
And he struck his fist on the table, and gave it them left and right.
He said it was lies, and dared them to breathe a word 'gen the lad;
He feared it might reach the farmer, but Ned knew as the boy was bad.

Old Bradley was weak and ailing, the doctor had whispered Ned
That a sudden shock would kill him: that he held his life by a thread.
So that made Ned more than anxious to keep the slanders back
That were running rife in the village about the scapegrace Jack.

One night—I shall ne'er forget it, for it came like a thunder clap—
The news came into the village as they'd found a pedlar chap
Smothered in blood, and senseless, shot and robbed on the Green,
And they brought Ned back here handcuffed, two constables between.

At first we couldn't believe it as he could ha' been the man,
But one of our chaps had caught him just as he turned and ran—
Had caught Ned there red-handed, with a gun and the pedlar's gold,
And we went in a crowd to the station, where the rest of the tale was told.

The facts against Ned were damning. When they got the pedlar round,
His wound was probed, and a bullet that fitted Ned's gun was found.
He'd been shot from behind a hedgerow, and had fallen and swooned away,
And Ned must have searched his victim, and have robbed him as he lay.

They kept it back from the farmer, who had taken at last to his bed.
Eve came, red-eyed, and told him that she'd had a quarrel with Ned,
And he'd gone away, had left them, and perhaps he wouldn't come back.
Old Bradley said he was sorry—then asked for his boy—his Jack.

And Jack, white-faced and trembling, he crept to the old man's side,
And was scarcely away from the homestead till after the farmer died.
On the night that death crossed the threshold, one last long lingering look
At the face that was his dead darling's, the poor old farmer took.

As the shadows of twilight deepened the long ago came back,
And his weak voice faintly whispered, "Lean over, and kiss me, Jack;—
"Let me take your kiss to Heaven, to the mother who died for you."
And Eve sobbed out as she heard him, "Thank God, he never knew."

In his lonely cell a felon heard of the old man's end,
In a letter his faithful sweetheart had conquered her grief to send;
And the load of his pain was lightened as he thought of what might have been,
Had Jack, and not he, been taken that night upon Parson's Green!

Five years went over the village, and then one Midsummer eve
Came Ned back here as an outcast—out on a ticket o' leave.
And all of the people shunned him, the Bradleys had moved away,
For Jack had squandered the money in drink, and in vice, and play.

Poor Eve was up at the Doctor's—his housekeeper grave and staid;
There was something about her manner that made her old flames afraid.
Not one of them went a-wooing—they said that her heart was dead,
That it died on the day the judges sentenced her sweetheart, Ned.

"Ticket o' Leave" they called him after he came back here.
God knows what he did for a living, he must have been starved pretty near
But he clung to the village somehow—got an odd job now and then,
But whenever a farmer took him there was grumbling among the men.

He was flouted like that a twelvemonth—then suddenly came a tale
That a man out of our village had been sick in the county gaol.
Sick unto death, and dying, he had eased his mind of a sin,
Hoping by that atonement some mercy above to win.

We knew it all that Sunday—for the Parson right out in church,
He wiped away in a moment from Ned the felon smirch.
He told us his noble story how following Jack that night
He had seen him shoot at the pedlar, and rob him, and take to flight.

He had seized the gun and the money from the rascal's trembling hand.
Jack fled at the sound of footsteps, and the rest you can understand.
The word that he might have spoken he kept to himself to save,
For the sake of the dying father, the pitiful thief and knave.

He knew that the blow would hasten the death of one who had done
More for him than a father—who had treated him as a son.
And so he had suffered in silence, all through the weary years,
The felon's shame and the prison, and the merciless taunts and jeers.

Hark ! there's the organ pealing—see how the crowd divides.
Room for the best of fellows—room for the Queen of Brides.
Look at their happy faces—three cheers for the faithful Eve,
And three times three and another for Ned the "Ticket o' Leave."

Notes on the Pantomimes.

By George Lancaster.

IT is the way of the world when a man succeeds in life and suddenly rushes past his companions in the inevitable race, to ascribe the result of his perseverance and energy to luck. According to this accepted theory the young manager of Drury Lane—Mr. Augustus Harris—is the luckiest man who ever dipped into the inexhaustible purse of Fortunatus. I should rather be inclined to ascribe his good fortune to readiness and tact. Mr. Harris does not go to sleep. The world moves quickly, and he moves quickly with the world. Although he has been fortunate, he can pull off his coat and work if needs be, he looks after his own business and does not sit with his hands in his pockets, and he seems to be convinced that the public will support the manager who is most wide-awake and liberal.

Now a Drury Lane pantomime is an English institution. We can no more do without it than roast beef, plum-pudding, and

mince-pies. A Boxing Day without pantomime would be as empty as a Christmas Day without dinner. An ordinary, contented, easy-going Drury Lane manager might have said, "Well, the public must come and see my pantomime whether they like it or not, they will come in hundreds and thousands and book their seats in advance, whether I spend a great deal of money or whether I spend no money at all. My good old friend E. L. Blanchard understands his business, and a Drury Lane pantomime cannot be a failure." Mr. Harris seems to work on the opposite principle. First, he stops competition, and next he spends more money on his 1883 pantomime of "Sindbad the Sailor" than has ever been spent before. By an ingenious and amicable arrangement with the manager of Covent Garden, the young manager closed the doors of Covent Garden at Christmas, and so cleverly was the understanding worded that it would not even let in the Alhambra entertainment when this splendid theatre was unfortunately burned down. Had Mr. Harris only specified that there was to be no pantomime at Covent Garden this Christmas, the Alhambra company would have been a formidable rival, but the substitution of some such words "or any entertainment of a similar character," gives the *quietus* to any plan for making a new Alhambra at Covent Garden, unless, indeed, the law or compromise wills it otherwise.

I have had the opportunity of inspecting the stores of scenery and properties and the elaborate wardrobes already stocked for the Drury Lane pantomime next Boxing Day, and, from all I can see, I should say that the grand historical procession would be the most brilliant effect in stage archæology that London has ever seen. The procession is supposed to consist of the Kings and Queens of England, with their pages, knights, barons, standard-bearers, equerries, and notabilities of the Court, from the reign of William the Conqueror to Queen Victoria. All the monarchs and celebrated characters wear masks, modelled, designed and coloured by Mr. Labhart, whom I found deep in the study of shields copied from the Bayeux Tapestry. The ladies will be simply "made-up," after the Queens and courtiers of England, and, as an essay in costume, I don't suppose anything like it has ever been seen. Every learned authority has been ransacked, and accuracy has been considered of the first importance. Each of these dresses, elaborately prepared by Madame Auguste—even those worn by the humblest extra lady or supernumerary—is such as might be worn at any fancy ball in the

kingdom. M. Pilotell, and that excellent antiquary, Mr. Chasemore, are responsible for these elaborate designs, which, when seen *en masse*—helmets, glittering armour, and all—will present a picture of remarkable beauty. The armour, which will constitute a special feature, comes from Kennedy, of Birmingham, the Alhambra armourers who adorned "Babil and Bijou"; and from Wilson, of London.

A novelty will be introduced this year of scenery painted in Vienna by the firm of Brianski-Kartski, which will be found remarkably unconventional and effective, lending itself as it does to new and beautiful effects of light; and in the absence of the veteran and accomplished scene-painter, Mr. Beverley, the companion of Mr. E. L. Blanchard in so many "Annuals," Mr. H. Emden will look after the English decorative work. We shall miss the pleasant face of Mr. John Cormack, the director of so many Drury Lane ballets, perched up on his wooden stool at the prompt-wing; but the fame of Mr. John D'Auban is very great, and he will have the task of instructing and perfecting the coryphées, led to the attack by Madame Zanfretti, the première danseuse.

But children who go to a pantomime like nothing better than to see children act. Indeed, this is one of Mr. Blanchard's pantomime hobbies, and the children trained by Madame Katie Lanner made such a success last year that, of course, they will be on the stage again. In addition to these, there will be an army of boys and girls, fitted out and accoutred in the most wonderful little uniforms ever devised. They represent the army of Egypt under Sir Garnet Wolseley, in fighting trim, complete and accurate to every haversack and button. The children in the audience will be wild with delight when they see them, and demand, I should say, their cast-off uniforms after Christmas for the nursery. I next come to the company proper, now hard at work studying and rehearsing our good old friend Mr. Blanchard's musical lines and lyrics. Several favourites will instantly step upon the scene. Miss Nelly Power, the Sindbad of the old story, famed for her vivacity and expressive ballad singing; Mr. Arthur Roberts and Mr. Harry Nicholls, two excellent comedians, not forgetting, of course, Mr. Fawn, the *alter ego* of Mr. Roberts; Mr. Herbert Campbell, a great favourite and excellent singer; Mr. J. D'Auban, and that genius in pantomime, Mr. C. Lauri, junior, Mr. F. Storey, Mr. J. Ridley, and

many more. As to the clown, who should he be but Harry Payne, *facile princeps* in his art, the last of a grand old pantomimic family. Contrasted with pure pantomime and burlesque there will be Miss Annie Rose to represent taste, refinement, and fancy, as a very charming Zaide, and all will welcome that clever and versatile Emma D'Auban, who is vivacity itself. The Mario Sisters, the Robina Sisters, Luna and Stella, Vesta Tilly, and many more, have earned their popularity elsewhere, and may be expected with confidence to make this vast machinery of fun and fancy to move easily. That thoroughly capable and excellent musician Mr. Oscar Barrett will be once more in the orchestra, and the comforts of the audience will be attended to by Mr. Augustus A. Moore, the right-hand man of Mr. Harris. Do not let any one imagine that the duties of a Drury Lane manager are a sinecure at Christmas-time. Mr. Harris has inherited the art of stage management from his father, who made the Covent Garden operatic stage what it was some years ago, and the whole of this enormous responsibility of direction he takes on his shoulders, scarcely leaving the theatre for night or day before the pantomime is produced, and occupying himself with the superintendence of every detail. But it is the Procession of Kings and Queens that will be the talk of all London in a few days' time, and will astonish those who are accustomed to associate these entertainments with conventional glitter. And still a word to the children! There will be some big heads! No pantomime is worth the name without big heads! Look out for the Barons in the Court of King John. I have seen them in Mr. Labhart's studio. And above all, you children of a larger growth, look up your English history. Know for certain and beyond dispute the order in which the kings and queens come, or the little ones will laugh you out of the stalls and boxes. Drury Lane this year will combine education with amusement.

Now that the Alhambra Theatre is burnt down, and pending the opening of the Pandora Theatre, Leicester Square, the lovers of spectacular display may seek amusement at Her Majesty's Theatre, which opens on December 30, with "The Yellow Dwarf," a burlesque extravaganza, written by Messrs. Robert Reece and Alfred Thompson. The scenery has been prepared by Messrs. Walter Hann, W. L. Telbin, and Walter Spong, the principal scenes being allotted as follows: The Palace of Fans (Spong), the Orange Grove (Hann), the Copper Castle (Telbin),

and the Gold Mines, also by Mr. Telbin. There are two novel and attractive ballets, the "Ballet of Fans," and the "Furies' Revel." Mdlle. Bella is the première danseuse, and she will be assisted by Mdlle. Gilberte and Mdlle. Rosa and her troupe. The company includes Misses Emma Chambers, Marie Lindon, and Olga Marini, and Messrs. Alfred Vance, E. L. Sothern, and the Huline Brothers. Then there are also Ænéa, the flying fairy, Lockhart's twin elephants, and a host of pretty girls in a ballet of more than a hundred. M. Haussens, of Moscow, is the ballet master, the ballet music has been composed by the chef d'orchestre, Signor Mora, and the entire production will be brought out under the personal superintendence of Mr. Alfred Thompson, the managing director of the Pandora Theatre.

At the Avenue Theatre a children's pantomime on the subject of "Dick Whittington and his Cat" will be produced on Christmas Eve. It will be acted entirely by children, some eighty in number. The Alcazar Theatre (the old Connaught), in Holborn, opens on Boxing Night with Mr. Frank Hall's version of "Cinderella." Over three hundred artistes including Mr. Shiel Barry, Mr. Arthur Goodrich, and Miss Rozie Lowe, are engaged. The theatre has been considerably improved, and re-decorated and furnished. A new act-drop has been prepared, and the scenery painted by Messrs. T. W. Grieve, Sidney Baker, and T. Parry.

Messrs. George Conquest and Henry Spry have furnished the book of the Surrey pantomime of "Puss in Boots," which treats of the war between the rat and cat kingdoms. The scenery and dresses are of a most elaborate description, and the pantomime will be supported by Mr. George Conquest, junr., as the Giant, and by Messrs. Victor Stevens, C. Cruikshanks, and Harry Monkhouse, Miss Sara Beryl, the Albert's and Edmund's troupe, the Brothers Belmont, the Brothers Clayton, and others. Mr. George Conquest superintends the entire production.

Mr. Wilson Barrett's forthcoming pantomime for the Grand Theatre, Leeds, is an entirely new version of the story of "Robinson Crusoe," the libretto being, as usual, written by Mr. J. Wilton Jones. The preparations have been going on for several months past, and various eminent scenic artists have been busily engaged, including Mr. Walter Hann, Mr. Bruce Smith, Mr. Stafford Hall, Mr. Louis Edouarde, and Mr. Johnson. The scenic and mechanical effects are said to be highly novel and ingenious. From the depths below the sea, the scene changes to

a beautiful view of the Port of Hull, where the hero's adventures commence. One mechanical change rapidly follows another, until we find ourselves on the full-set deck of Crusoe's vessel. The storm rises, the ship sinks beneath the waves, and Crusoe is seen on the raft riding safely on the calm sea in the tropical moonlight, and steering for the distant island. The other characters are rescued in various ways, and, when upon the island and among the savages, their adventures follow each other in fast and furious fashion. Crusoe's hut is besieged by the cannibals, the walls are blown down, and Crusoe and his party escape in canoes, being, however, vigorously pursued by the cannibal king and his myrmidons. The scene of "The Golden Island," by Mr. Stafford Hall, is spoken of as a beautiful stage picture; and in this scene the procession, with its enormous and striking "properties," its crowds of barbaric warriors and amazons, and its glow of colour, will no doubt be the talk of all Yorkshire. The remaining scenes show how the villany of Will Atkins is defeated; how Crusoe is rescued from the power of his savage foes by the military might of Great Britain; how the cannibal king is brought to England (*à la* Cetewayo); and how the nuptials of Crusoe and his sweetheart Polly are celebrated in a locality which all Yorkshiremen will recognize. With merry song and dance and comic incident the story runs along gaily to the end, when Mr. Louis Edouarde's magnificent transformation scene—founded on the legend of "Paradise and the Peri"—gives the crowning touch to Mr. Barrett's fifth annual at the Grand Theatre and his eighth in Leeds. The dresses throughout have been designed by M. Wilhelm. The company is an exceptionally strong one. Miss Fannie Leslie, who made such a hit as Crusoe at Drury Lane last year, has been specially engaged to play the title *rôle*, and the other performers include Mr. H. D. Burton, Mr. H. C. Arnold, Chirgwin, the "White-Eyed Kaffir," the Brothers Griffiths, the entire Lupino family of pantomimists, Miss Kissie Wood, Miss Grace Whiteford, and numerous other performers of more or less note. Mr. Wilson Barrett's liberality in catering for his patrons at the Grand increases year by year, and this time his efforts bid fair to eclipse all that have gone before.

"Bluebeard" is the title of Mr. Edward Saker's fifteenth Christmas pantomime at the Liverpool Alexandra Theatre. It has been expressly written for Mr. Saker by Mr. T. F. Doyle, who

also plays a principal part in the pantomime. It will be brought out on a grander scale than has hitherto been attempted in Liverpool. The following special engagements have been made: Misses Nellie Bouverie, Kate Lovell, Polly Marsh, F. Marriott, Alice Dodds, Milnes, Maude Stanley, and Milburn; Messrs. J. H. Milburn, George Lester, C. E. Stevens, C. Danby, James Danvers, Messrs. Vern and Volt, and the Leopold Brothers. Mr. John Brunton has painted the magnificent scenery, the principal scenes being the Dominions of Discord, and the Market Place of Bagdad. The ballet scene represents beautiful warm flowers, with an instantaneous change to a snow scene. The Blue Chamber is treated in a novel manner, and there is a snow-drift with animated trees. The big procession is very sumptuous, and there are some capital military scenes founded on episodes in the recent Egyptian war, together with a lovely transformation scene. Mr. John Ross once more composes and arranges the music, and Mr. Saker, assisted by Mr. G. W. Harris, again personally superintends the entire thing.

The pantomime at the Theatre Royal Edinburgh, is "Robinson Crusoe," the book being written by the author of last year's successful production, "Dick Whittington." The company taking part in it is a very strong one; including among its members, Miss Carrie Lee Stoyle, Miss Susie Montague, Miss Helene de Valence, Miss Marion Aubrey, Mr. Sidney Harcourt, who made a great hit in last year's pantomime, Mr. William Randall, Mr. Sidney Stevens, Mr. Herbert Gresham, and Messrs. Lennard and Wilmore. The scenery is by Mr. Dangerfield, and the entire production is under the careful personal attention of Mr. and Mrs. Howard, whose high reputation as producers of pantomime it bids fair to enhance.

In Glasgow they are already hard at work with the pantomimes, which were brought out there on December 9. Mr. T. W. Charles, the lessee of the Grand Theatre in that city, has designed his own pantomime, which is on the subject of "Robinson Crusoe." The title *rôle* is played by Miss Emily Spiller, and Misses Laura Clement, Leila Fortescque, and Kate Paradise, and Messrs. Fred. W. Newham, Gerard Coventry, J. B. Gordon, and John S. Chamberlain are also in the cast.

Mr. H. Cecil Beryl's pantomime at the Princess's, Glasgow, is "Little Red Riding Hood." Miss Katie Neville cleverly plays Red Riding Hood, Miss Katie Ryan is a spirited Boy Blue, Miss

Nellie Burdette, a charming Miss Muffit, Miss Marion Huntley is Jack Horner, and Miss Florence Harrington acts Jill Warner. Amongst the gentlemen the principal honours have been carried off by Mr. Edward S. Gofton as the Wolf, Mr. H. G. Clifford as the Baron, and Mr. Ramsey Danvers as Granny.

At the New Theatre Royal, Bristol, "Dick Whittington and his Cat" is to be the Christmas production. The magnificent scenery has been painted by Messrs. E. Brunton, M. Barraud, and Arthur Henderson. The company is particularly strong, and includes Miss Julia Warden, Miss Amy Grundy, Miss Rita Presano, the Sisters Taylor, and Miss Fanny Brown ; Mr. George Thorne, Mr. E. M. Robson, Mr. H. Lewens, Mr. Alexander Knight, Messrs. Henderson and Stanley, and Harry Paulo. Mr. C. H. Stephenson, who supplies the book of the pantomime, is specially engaged to produce it. In order to render the pantomime complete, a peal of church bells has been specially manufactured for the theatre at a cost of £450. Messrs. Chute have done everything to ensure success for their pantomime, and they deserve it.

Mr. R. Melville's pantomime at the old Royal, Bristol, is written by Mr. James Horner, and is entitled "Red Riding Hood and the three Jacks." Mr. Melville's company is a strong one, and includes Misses Emily Randall, Alice Brindsley, Blanche Symmonds, Florence Austin, Messrs. Fred. Alberts, and others.

Mr. Fred. Neebe's forthcoming Christmas annual will be the ever-popular "Robinson Crusoe," written expressly by Mr. J. Wilton Jones, of Leeds, for Exeter, and to suit the artistes engaged. The company will include Messrs. J. W. Bradbury, Fred. Solomon, Charles Dodsworth, E. J. Lonnen, John L. Avondale, &c.; Mesdames Rosie St. George, Laura Grey, Nina Engel, Maud Stoneham, Lizzie Aubrey, Athena Thompson, Blanch Hibbert, &c. At Exeter the pantomime will run five weeks, after which it will be taken to Devonport for twelve nights, and finally to Bath for three weeks, making a continued run of ten weeks in all. At the New Theatre, Devonport, "Manteaux Noirs" will be produced on December 23 for twelve nights ; and at Bath, Gilbert and Sullivan's "Iolanthe" will be played for the first time in the provinces on Boxing Night, December 26. There it will run three weeks, and it will then be transferred to Devonport and Exeter. In each of these towns Mr. Neebe is the lessee of the theatre.

Captain Bainbridge's pantomime at the Manchester Theatre

Royal has been written by Mr. J. F. McArdle, and is entitled "Sinbad the Sailor." Sinbad will be played by Miss Jenny Hill. Miss Alice Burville is the Zorilda, Mr. Julian Cross is Shipwreckeros, and the cast also includes Mr. George Walton, Mr. R. H. Cummings, Mr. J. L. Shine, and Mr. John Walton. The beautiful scenery has been painted by Mr. H. P. Hall, and the transformation shows the pantomime hero extending a welcome to our soldiers and our Queen. At the Prince's Theatre in the same city, the boards will be occupied at Christmas with Mr. Reece's burlesque of "Robin Hood."

"Little Red Riding Hood" is the title of Mrs. Nye Chart's holiday annual for 1882–3, to be produced at the Brighton Theatre on the 23rd, the libretto by Mr. Frank W. Green. The company in the opening includes Miss Lizzie Coote, Miss Carry Coote, Miss Nelly Vere, Misses Nellie Coombes, Tiny Hastings, Millie Howard, Amy Forrest, Frances Lyndon, Rose Bertram, the Eden and Sims ballet troupe, the Wood and Rosie Families, Henry and Charles Raynor, Mr. H. Cooper Cliffe, Miss Hannah Andrews, Queen Mab; Mr. Charles Ottley, Mr. W. Sweetman, Mr. F. Bruce, Mr. William Simpson, clown; pantaloon, W. English; columbine, Miss Wilson; harlequin, Frank Sims. The chief effect will be the children's library, in which a whole posse of juveniles will appear.

Our Musical-Box.

"IOLANTHE; OR, THE PEER AND THE PERI."

An Entirely Original Fairy Opera, in Two Acts, written by W. S. Gilbert, composed by Arthur Sullivan.

First Produced at the Savoy Theatre, London, on Saturday evening, November 25th, 1882.

The Lord Chancellor	Mr. George Grossmith.	Iolanthe	Miss Jessie Bond.
Earl of Mountararat	Mr. Rutland Barrington.	Celia	Miss Fortescue.
Earl Tolloler ...	Mr. Durward Lely.	Leila	Miss Julia Gwynne.
Private Willis ...	Mr. Manners.	Fleta	Miss Sybil Grey.
Strephon	Mr. R. Temple.	Phyllis	Miss Leonora Braham.
Queen of the Fairies	Miss Alice Barnett.		

MR. W. S. GILBERT, as the founder of a novel and extremely taking variety of humorousness, has a large following of intelligent laughter lovers who await each successive production of his fancy with yearning impatience, and receive it, when it appears, with demonstrative gratitude. As a comic verse-writer and librettist, he is also in high favour with the upper and middle classes of English society, who recognize in him the representative head *par*

excellence of a cynical and scoffing period—their own. In short, he is the fashion, and his claims to that enviable distinction—some of them, at least—are indisputable. This being so, any "namer of winners" desirous to enhance his fame for accurate foresight, might have confidently prophesied, weeks before the *première* of "Iolanthe" at the Savoy, that the new "fairy opera" would turn out a success, as it unquestionably did. To Dr. Arthur Sullivan's share in ensuring the certainty of this result I shall presently refer more particularly. He has as much to do with it as Mr. Gilbert, but in a different way. The combination is a peculiarly happy one, and "draws" the public irresistibly. To thousands, doubtless, the chief attraction of "Iolanthe" will be a libretto by the Poet of Paradoxes and Incongruities; to other thousands the promise of enjoyment will lie in the music of a composer whose popularity is based upon talent and culture of a very high order. But, in this felicitous partnership, it is Mr. Gilbert, after all, who is the mirth-mover. He has accustomed us to regard him as a fertile imaginer of inimitable absurdities, and to expect that he will breathe his special vein of fun more and more copiously every time he puts forward a new work. This *libretti*, moreover, from "Pinafore" to "Patience," have fully justified that view and expectation.

When, therefore, a first-night's audience, prepared to laugh itself sore, and in great measure consisting of Mr. Gilbert's avowed admirers, finds that gentleman exhibiting a tendency to import pathos and politics into a "book" like that of "Iolanthe," it may be excused for expressing disappointment as well as surprise—the more so because his pathos smacks of anger, a passion altogether out of place in a "fairy opera," and his politics are bitterly aggressive. Anything like a moral, pointedly recommended to public attention in connection with ingenious buffoonery and put into the mouth of such a character as Mr. Gilbert's hero—a diverting monstrosity, half fairy, half mortal, whose only *raison d'être* is the wealth of comic contrasts suggested by his dual nature—is calculated to exercise a depressing effect upon people who went to laugh, not to cry; to be tickled into complacency, not roused to indignation. The libretto of "Iolanthe" has been utilized by its author as the vehicle for conveying to society at large a feeling protest on behalf of the indigent, and a scathing satire upon the hereditary moiety of our Legislature. Advocacy and denunciation of this sort are all very well in melodrama, where telling "points"

may always be made with the unmerited wrongs of the poor and the reprehensible uselessness of the aristocracy. But they jar upon the ear and taste alike when brought to bear upon us through the medium of a song sung by half a fairy in a professedly comic opera. Strephon's Invocation to Parliament, "Fold your flapping wings," might have been written by Mr. G. R. Sims in his most democratic mood. Emanating from Mr. Gilbert, it amazes and even startles one, like the fall of a red-hot thunderbolt from a smiling summer sky.

There is certainly nothing tragical or even dull about the unfavourable view of Peers, as far as their brain-power is concerned, that pervades the "Iolanthe" libretto from beginning to end. But, no less certainly, it is open to the reproach of injustice. No man living knows better than Mr. Gilbert that, in proportion to the total male adult population of this country, there are as many pompous asses out of the Peerage as in it. Is it, then, quite fair on his part to assign the monopoly of imbecility to the House of Lords? He himself hardly thinks so, to judge by a keen innuendo he launches at the Lower House early in his second act. A fay-inspired Legislature is about to pass a measure throwing open the Peerage to competitive examination. Commenting upon this innovation, one of Mr. Gilbert's noblemen is made to say, "With a House of Peers composed exclusively of people of intellect, what's to become of the House of Commons?"

As I yield to no one in my admiration of Mr. Gilbert's genius, it is a source of real regret to me to observe in his latest work symptoms of a fatigue that may have occurred to him from overriding his humorous hobby of inward promptings in the direction of sentimentability, and of an alarming disposition to polemicize. Having given vent to this grumble, much against the grain, I will now address myself to the more agreeable exercise of pointing out a few of "Iolanthe's" many excellences.

In the first place the plot is a capital one—of the Bab Ballad class of story, of course, and very good of its sort. Phyllis, the heroine, is an Arcadian shepherdess and presumably an orphan, for the Lord Chancellor is her guardian. Strephon, the hero, owes his being to a romantic marriage between a fairy and a Chancery barrister who, when introduced to the audience, has recently achieved the Woolsack. Strephon's physical and mental machinery, owing to the mixed character of his parentage, is con-

structed upon the "duplex action" system. His body is partly immortal and partly perishable—his soul is at odds within itself upon political and other questions of importance. Strange to say, his affections are undivided, and belong in their entirety to Phyllis, as do hers to him. The union of these two pastoral lovers is prohibited by the Lord Chancellor (who is profoundly unconscious of the fact that Strephon is his son, born in lawful wedlock), chiefly because that legal dignitary wants to marry Phyllis himself. Her attractions, indeed, are so overpowering that they have captivated the hearts of all the Peers of the Realm, who, as well as their learned speaker, are suitors for her hand.

Through his fairy-mother, however, Strephon secures the patronage of her supernatural relatives, who are prepared at a moment's notice to turn all human institutions inside out in the matrimonial interests of their kinsman and *protégé*. They get him into the House of Commons for a fairy-borough, and practise spells upon the other members, with the effect of getting all his revolutionary measures passed. Having virtually abolished the Peers, they fall in love with them and turn them into fairies, to avoid future complications of the Strephon order. Wings sprout from their Lordships' shoulders. Phyllis, Strephon, and Private Willis, a gigantic Guardsman, in whom the Fairy Queen finds a conjugal match for her own lofty stature and massive proportions, are also, by a wave of Her Majesty's spear, endowed with those volatile appendages. And the opera concludes with a dance and chorus, professedly preparatory for a flight "sky-high, sky-high," where noble Lords are to "exchange House of Peers for House of Peris." It would not surprise me to learn that this *jeu de mots* suggested the fundamental paradox upon which the plot of "Iolanthe" has been most ingeniously built up.

The fairies and their stupendous Queen (Miss Alice Barnett), at the opening of the piece, recommend themselves to us by good looks and singing, pretty dresses, graceful gestures, and excellent delivery of the amusing incongruities with which their speaking parts are crowded. At this time, Iolanthe is a fairy in disgrace. For having surreptitiously married a mortal she is—and has been, for a quarter of a century past—standing on her head at the bottom of a stream. Her sister-fays, finding Fairy-land a trifle dull without her, petition the Queen to pardon her, which that vast potentate readily does, moved to pity by remembrance of the

services formerly rendered to her by Iolanthe, as her instructress in gymnastics. In teaching so abnormally robust a person as Her Majesty to curl herself up inside a buttercup Iolanthe has indisputably displayed talents that should not be allowed to remain in abeyance under water. She is summoned to the surface of her aqueous penitentiary, fully forgiven and officially reinstated in her old rank at the Fairy Court. As soon as she has informed her sisters that she has a hybrid son, twenty-four years of age, who keeps sheep, and is engaged to a Ward in Chancery, Strephon (Mr. R. Temple) enters in the approved pastoral garb of Arcady, capering hilariously and playing upon a flageolet. The fairies take him up enthusiastically, and then take themselves off. Phyllis (Miss Leonora Braham) joins him, and the lovers resolve upon a clandestine marriage that very day.

Now enters, preceded by the Grenadier Guards' band in full play, a procession of the most gorgeous beings that ever trod the boards of the Savoy or any other theatre. The British Peer, for the first time in operatic annals, is exhibited to the general public in all his glory. Probably Solomon himself was not arrayed like one of these. It must have been a Collar-day at Court, and their Lordships must have strolled down to Arcadia direct from the Presence ; for they are in the fullest conceivable gala fig, wearing their coronets, dress-swords, and satin "smalls," as well as the mantles, collars, stars and badges of English, Scottish, Irish, and Colonial Orders of Chivalry. Anybody suffering from curiosity, with respect to honorific insignia, can gratify his yearnings at the Savoy. There will he see Knights of the Garter, Bath and Thistle, of St. Patrick, SS. Michael and George, and the Star of India. Dark and light blue, crimson, pale green and rich purple mantles, embroidered with quaint devices and mottoes—ermine, velvet, pearls, strawberry leaves, enamel and glittering metal—all these and many other splendid emblematic gauds will meet his eye. The get-up of the Savoy Peers is correct to a ribbon end ; and, taken as a body, they are much livelier than their Westminster prototypes. Singing a rollicking chorus, the refrain of which is "Tantantara ! Tzing ! Boom !" they march round the stage to the bray of trumpets and the roll of drums. For the most part, their faces are admirably "made up" to the "elderly swell" type, happily crossed (chiefly in expression) with the common councilman, churchwarden, and vestryman varieties. Then

come the Lord Chancellor (Mr. G. Grossmith), followed by a train-bearer, who is a joy for ever. The House, every member of which is over head and ears in love with Phyllis, has met in extraordinary session to discuss its position towards that fascinating young person, who appears before it in obedience to her legal guardian's mandate, conveyed to her by the Earl of Mountararat (Mr. R. Barrington), whose "make-up" is a singularly accurate replica of George the Fourth's well-known "Coronation" portrait. This nobleman and Irish peer, Lord Tolloler (Mr. D. Lely), are, by reason of their relative youthfulness—nearly all the other patricians are past their prime—the most eligible of all the titled candidates for Phyllis's hand; and they plead their cause, as well as that of their order, in Mr. Gilbert's happiest upside-down manner. "Spurn not the nobly born with love affected," urges Lord Tolloler in a fine gentlemanly brogue, "nor treat with virtuous scorn the well-connected. High rank involves no shame—we boast an equal claim with him of humble name, to be respected!" But Phyllis is loyal to her shepherd until jealousy is aroused in her breast by the following subtle contrivance. Eternal youth is Iolanthe's—that is to say, she waxed older in appearance from her birth to her seventeenth year, but not afterwards. Perhaps early marriage stopped her growth. Anyhow, she looks (at forty-three) much younger than her son, a stout bumpkin of four-and-twenty. Mother and child are, however, demonstratively fond of one another; and their mutual caresses, witnessed by Phyllis, seem to her to admit but of one interpretation. She breaks with Strephon despite the intervention of the fairies, who bear witness to the real character of his relations with Iolanthe, and, highly irritated at the incredulity with which their assurances are received by the Peers, threaten to abolish their order and substitute for it a Peerage based upon merit instead of birth. The *finale* in which this "situation" is developed will rank (until surpassed by its authors) as the most vigorous, effective and complete of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's joint compositions. It is positively crammed full of good things, both in words and music. An *ensemble*, with the patter burthen "Taradiddle, taradiddle, tol tol lay!" positively sparkles with literary and musical humour, and so, indeed, does another, in galop time ("Young Strephon is the King of Love"), to which, after a unanimous recall and to thunders of applause, the curtain meets

(it does not "come down" at the Savoy) as Phyllis swoons into the arms of Tolloler and Mountararat.

A magnificent Grenadier Guardsman (Mr. Manners), who is "doing sentry-go" by moonlight in Palace Yard, opens the second act with an admirable song, his sedate, deliberate, and tuneful delivery of which is irresistibly taking. Tripping fairies and strutting Peers then indulge in some neat epigrammatical wrangling on the subject of Parliamentary Reform. In a pseudo-patriotic lay, Lord Mountararat sets forth the splendid services rendered to Britain by the Upper House, when absolutely inert. By this time the fairies are irrevocably enamoured of their Lordships, and betray their feelings in a duet and chorus ("In vain to us you plead"), which I venture to designate as the gem of the opera. Music and words alike are surpassingly sympathetic and charming. The Fairy Queen, too, is soul-smitten by the thews and sinews of Private Willis, but hopes to quench the rising flame of her "great love" by the aid of Captain Shaw's brigade. Eyre Shaw, C.B., is one of the most popular men in London society, and deservedly so. At the *première* of "Iolanthe" the boxes, stalls, and circles were chiefly occupied by his friends and acquaintances, whose outburst of hilarity upon hearing Miss Barnett describe him as a "type of true love kept under," was a memorable incident of the first night.

The rest of the second act may be summed up briefly—the more so because, as I have been informed, it has been judiciously pruned of its more tiresome and objectionable superfluities. That the patter-song assigned to George Grossmith is too long for singer and public alike, its author frankly confesses in its last line; and I cordially agree with him. Fortunately, it is closely followed by one of the brightest numbers in the whole opera, a trio with a dancing refrain ("If you go in"), sung by the Lord Chancellor, Mountararat, and Tolloler. A bat-like *pas*, executed by Grossmith at the close of the third verse, is excruciatingly funny. Iolanthe's appeal to her husband on behalf of Strephon—an air previously utilized by Dr. Sullivan as the leading *motive* of his overture—is genuinely touching; perhaps too much so, as it causes the Chancellor to shed tears. The public does not expect to see George Grossmith earnestly simulate sorrow; nor is it fair to him that he should be required to portray emotion of that class instead of caricaturing it. This pathetic episode, in itself musically and

poetically beautiful, though a decided violation of "the unities," brings about the Chancellor's discovery that his fairy-wife is living, as well as a grown-up son, the object of his ward's affections. Of course everybody is made happy. Fairies mate with Peers, their Queen proposes to Private Willis, and is accepted by him in a self-sacrificing spirit, whereupon he develops a dainty pair of scarlet wings (the Chancellor's are snow-white, and contrast very comically with the jet-black of his *levée* dress), and the opera concludes as gaily as may be with a brisk dancing-chorus.

I do not hesitate to say that the music of "Iolanthe" is Dr. Sullivan's *chef-d'œuvre*. The quality throughout is more even, and maintained at a higher standard, than in any of his earlier works, each one of which has successively exhibited a marked advance upon its precursor. In fitting notes to words so exactly what the "book" and its setting appears to be one and indivisible, our gifted countryman is without a rival in Europe, now that Offenbach is no more. His vein of melody seems inexhaustible, and in constructive skill he can hold his own with any contemporary composer. Increase of years has brought him augmented geniality of humour and grace of expression. His musical quips and cranks are every whit as effective as Mr. Gilbert's literary jests; and to be instrumentally funny, without lapsing into vulgarity, is one of the most difficult feats in composition. "Iolanthe" has manifestly been a labour of love. From beginning to end it does not contain one ugly or even wearisome musical number. The overture epitomizes the opera very agreeably, and is orchestrated with remarkable ability. All the fairy music is charming. Wagnerian extravagances are here and there lightly, not irreverently, caricatured. The parody of "Die alte Weise" ("Tristan und Isolde," act iii.), played whilst Iolanthe is rising from her watery prison, struck me as being uncommonly clever, and so did the Rhine daughter and Walküre reminders in the last scene. As a matter of fact, I liked Sullivan's setting of "Aiaiah! Laloiah! and Willahalah!" better than Wagner's "Wagalaweia" and "Hoyotoho!" Some of the concerted music—notably the finale (with double chorus) to the first act and the quartette in the second act—is quite above ordinary praise. The same may, without the least exaggeration, be said of the orchestral accompaniments to the patter-song. As a work, "Iolanthe" is of greater musical importance than "Patience." Its tunes, however, are fewer in

number, and perhaps a thought less catching in character than those of "Bunthorne's Bride;" but in every respect it sustains Dr. Sullivan's reputation as the most spontaneous, fertile, and scholarly composer of comic opera this country has ever produced.

The performance on the first night was uniformly meritorious. The Savoy "eleven" is a good one, and its members never miss a chance of backing one another up. It has been decidedly strengthened by its latest recruit, Mr. Manners, whose impersonation of the small but effective part of Private Willis is simply unexceptionable. Miss Braham looks, sings, and acts as charmingly in the part of Phyllis as she did in that of Patience. Under a mask of owlish sagacity, George Grossmith, as the Lord Chancellor, conceals boundless amative susceptibilities and a quaint official conscientiousness that are extremely diverting. The part exactly suits him, and, by turns stonily grave and wildly frisky, he plays it to perfection. Miss Barnett's Fairy Queen is the most startling anachronism with which that talented lady has hitherto identified her stately person and quick intelligence. Miss Bond, as Iolanthe, is also a new variety of fairy—intensely womanly, and therefore sympathetic. The three sister-fays (Misses Fortescue, Gwynne, and Grey) deserve unqualified praise for their excellent delivery of words and music, and are delightful to look at. In Messrs. Barrington and Lely the British Peerage finds two sufficiently agreeable representatives; and Mr. Temple's Strephon is a very respectable theatrical shepherd, inclined to stoutness, but active on his feet, and, from a musical point of view, a decided attraction. The choruses could scarcely have been better sung, or the orchestral accompaniments better played, than when I heard them at the *première*, under Arthur Sullivan's leading. There are only two sets—one for each act—but each, in its way, is a masterpiece of painting and decoration. A small fortune has been spent upon the dresses. Self-lighting fairies, with electricity stored somewhere about the small of their backs, constitute the last thing in Savoy innovations. They are dazzling, and, I should think, somewhat costly beings—also perhaps, a little trying to the most artistic make-up. But they certainly constitute a picturesque feature in the rich *tableau* of colour and light with which the new fairy-opera very brilliantly and appropriately concludes. Wm. Beatty-Kingston.

Beside the Sea.

BESIDE the sea I saw her weep,
She took my hand beside the shore,
"Love's ways," she said, "are sore and steep,
Oh dear one, do not love me more !"
What can be sweeter now than rest,
To dream unto eternity,
Nought can be better—this is best,
Beside the Sea !

The wind blows seaward to the storm,
The sea rolls backward to the wreck,
The waves engulf the lifeless form,
And hush the horror of the deck.
All that is beautiful must die,
The faultless flow'r, the tender tree,
Yet we stand loving, you and I,
Beside the Sea !

Oh ! love me then, no more, no more ;
No kiss than this can sweeter taste,
Here standing by the silent shore,
Your arm encircled round my waist.
There must be change, there must be death,
To all who pray to God above,
To all who love, yes, this must be—
Now let us pause ; let's hold our breath,
Now let us only live and love
Beside the Sea !

December, 1882. C. S.

Mrs. Bernard-Beere.

MRS. BERNARD-BEERE, whose photograph appears in this number of THE THEATRE, is the daughter of Mr. Wilby Whitehead, a renowned Norfolk artist, and a niece of Mr. George Wingrove Cooke, barrister-at-law, a gentleman long connected with the *Times* newspaper, and the author of several well-known books. Mrs. Bernard-Beere is also a niece of Charles Whitehead, the author of "The Cavalier," and various other plays; she is the widow of Captain Edward Cholmeley Dering, the eldest son of Sir Edward Dering, Bart. She is also the god-daughter of William Makepeace Thackeray, who always called her, when she was a very small child, "the little actress." She was a pupil of Mr. Hermann Vezin, and Mrs. Beere made her first appearance on the stage at the Opera Comique, under the management of Mr. Hingston, acting there for two months. After her marriage she left the stage for a time, and on returning to it gave a very successful impersonation of Julia in "The Rivals," at the St. James's Theatre, which was then under the management of Mr. Hayes, and was greatly complimented for her acting by Mrs. Keeley, Mrs. Chippendale, and Mr. Walter Lacy. She also acted Lady Sneerwell, Grace Harkaway, and Emilia at the same theatre, with much success. Mrs. Bernard-Beere then appeared at the Royalty Theatre, under the management of Miss Fowler, as Lady Mantonville, in a play called "Scandal," adapted by Mr. Arthur Matthison from "Les Scandales d'Hier." During the same year she also played in a round of the old comedies at the Crystal Palace, and in the autumn of 1878 she acted the leading lady's parts in Mrs. Chippendale's provincial company. In a series of her own morning performances, commencing at the Olympic Theatre on January 25, 1879, she appeared as Constance in "The Love Chase," as Lady Teazle in "The School for Scandal," and in "The Lady of Lyons," "London Assurance," and "The Hunchback." At the Haymarket Theatre, in April of the same year, she acted Lydia Languish in "The Rivals," and in May she played Lady Teazle at the same theatre. On March 24, 1879, in the first performance of Mr. W. S. Gilbert's "Gretchen," at the

Olympic Theatre, she appeared as Lisa. In December, 1881, she acted the Princesse de Bouillon to the Adrienne Lecouvreur of Madame Modjeska, at the Court Theatre. At the Adelphi Theatre, Mrs. Bernard-Beere has played Miami in "The Green Bushes," Mrs. Desmond in "Kerry," Lady Teazle, and, on March 14, 1881, Sangarre in the first performance of Mr. Henry J. Byron's adaptation of "Michael Strogoff." On November 7, 1881, she acted Lady Maude Kennedy in Mr. Dion Boucicault's drama called "Mimi," and in the spring of 1882 she appeared in the provinces as Bathsheba Everdene in "Far from the Madding Crowd." Mrs. Bernard-Beere performed this character—which she has represented for more than a hundred nights—for the first time in London at the Globe Theatre, on April 29, 1882. She acted Dora Steer in the "Promise of May" at the same theatre, of which she then became manageress, on November 11 following. It may also be mentioned that Mrs. Bernard-Beere has also acted for charities, several times in French, when a resident in Brussels. She has also played at the Savoy Theatre as Lady Hilda in "Broken Hearts," with Mr. W. S. Gilbert as Florian, Mr. Hermann Vezin as Mousta, and Miss Marion Terry as Lady Vavir.

The career of Mrs. Bernard-Beere must be very encouraging to such as are never tired of preaching the doctrine that success on the stage can never be obtained without hard work. Inclination, aptitude, and many physical advantages are necessary at the outset of a career, but the finishing touch is only put on by hard, determined, and conscientious work. It is quite true that we have now no stock provincial companies—the old rough-and-ready training schools of actors and actresses—but we have got travelling companies that are even more advantageous, as they do not encourage the bad habit of swallowing and bolting so many parts in a week. Out of the record of Mrs. Bernard-Beere's career it would be possible to put the finger on two lucky moments: first, when she travelled and played the old comedies with the Chippendales; second, when she acted in Mr. Dion Boucicault's country company. If young actresses want to learn and study let them listen to the experienced voice of their elders in the profession. Mrs. Bernard-Beere has acted wisely and done well.

To Polyhymnia.

(Suggested by the Antique Statue in the Louvre.)

WHAT tarriest for, thou Muse of many hymns?
Why art not singing in Apollo's train?
Hearest thou not the Io Pæan's strain?
Or is it to thy soul as gull that skims
On the sea's surface, yet her feather'd limbs
Leave it behind no rougher? Art thou fain
To tell the thought which, circling in thy brain,
Doth weary thee, then ere 'tis spoken, dims?
Image of poet's all! thou findest ease
Only where bending branches hush the wind,
Where wind returns, "Oh, hush ye!" to the trees;
So Nature's airy parley soothes thy mind,
For, in her wise simplicity, she sees
The Muse would harmony, not silence, find.

Lena Milman.

Consolation.

IN dreams I climb the mountain, purple-stained
Where grows the heather, and that moorland fair
Which we once wandered o'er, no other there
Of all God's creatures—still I hear the stream
Fretting among the stones yellow and brown,
Where we sat watching, up the burn and down,
A darting dragon-fly through shade and gleam.
What sweet content of silence held us there?

Even your words, half cynical, half gay,
Of how you'd mend the world, would it but stay
To try your newest theory—vision rare
Of all our time might be—fell into calm
As earth's fresh beauty spoke to each heart's deep;
Only in sleep
Comes now to weary brain that sweetest balm,
Only in dreams—yet as I tread the street
Of this great city, through the unlovely din,
The sigh of want, the empty laugh of sin,
Some gracious thought born of that silence sweet
Uplifts my soul and bids fresh courage take,
Since even here is sunshine.

A. L. L.

Wilson Barrett.

BY AUSTIN BRERETON.

AT the present time, when the stage has assumed a position and an importance that has seldom before been accorded to it; when intelligent and right-minded people think the theatre worthy of their best support and encouragement; and when the public is more interested than it has been for many years over theatrical performances, it will not be out of place to consider the claims of one who has had a large share in the bringing about of this reformation. Rarely, indeed, has so much, so universal attention been given to the theatre, to its influence, to its art. Few things have made such rapid progress and created so much attention as the theatre of to-day compared with that of yesterday. For a considerable amount of this happy advancement, it seems to me, that the stage is indebted to the genius of such men as Wilson Barrett. There are few who have done so much for the good of the stage and who are so well-deserving of praise from all true lovers of the drama as he. Consider his work—his acting, the theatres which he conducts, the plays which he produces—and it may readily be seen that he has always been actuated by the highest motives, and has ever had the well-being of the English stage at heart. Commencing at the lowest point in the theatrical profession, he has risen to the highest, and his name can now be placed in the foremost rank of the stage. Step by step, slowly but surely, he has carved out his career, and at last he has mounted high on the ladder of fame.

In a recent lecture, Mr. Henry Irving remarked that "theatrical enterprise must be carried on as a business, or it will fail as an art." Now to make a success out of theatrical enterprise is easy enough, if that enterprise is worked upon the principle of the tradesman, but to make an art of one's theatrical enterprise, and to succeed with that artistic theatrical enterprise, is, to say the least, extremely difficult. Those managers who do succeed in such a manner are, indeed, scarce enough. But then so few managers try to elevate their theatre into an art. Too many of them, alas! are content with taking whatever lies readiest to

their hands, whether it be in the shape of "legs, short skirts, the musical glasses," a giantess, or any other money-producing novelty. Now to bring out sterling English plays full of interest and human nature, and to have those plays well acted, effectively stage-managed, and otherwise placed before the public with all that perfection which it is now possible to obtain, is good work which should surely be acknowledged and recognized as art. It is, without doubt, a noble and a worthy object to revive the works of Shakspeare, but then it is not possible to revive his works at every theatre. In a lesser way it is an admirable thing to reproduce the standard plays of other English dramatists; and, again, it is good to occasionally give us adaptations of certain French dramas.

But, after all, there is much original valuable dramatic work waiting to be recognized in this country, therefore all praise to the manager who has the faculty to discern it and the courage to produce it. In plays, for instance, such as "The Silver King" there is that strong interest, sentiment, and pathos, which we can all feel and understand. In producing pieces of this type, plays full of a strong human and domestic interest, well written and skilfully contrived, plays which tell a life story, whose strong situations are the natural outcome of the drama, Wilson Barrett has benefited the stage greatly. How different and how far more eloquent to the mind and heart are works of this class compared to those which are purely sensational, or, so to say, built upon a sensational incident. This latter kind of drama is constructed, one would think, on the reverse principle of preparing the scenery and the sensational effects first, and then calling in the author to write the piece and found it on the efforts of the scene-painter and the carpenter. How false to art this kind of production is does not need to be pointed out here—its hollowness is perceptible at a glance, and its singular weakness must be apparent to every thinking man and woman. Putting aside for the moment, the play of "The Silver King," let us compare these ultra-realistic productions with, say, "The Lights o' London." Here was a drama of pathos, interest, and romance; full of all those

> "Lights and shades, whose well-accorded strife
> Gives all the strength and colour of our life."

It was found to be full of passion and humanity, to contain

strong natural scenes and incidents, and pathetic moments, far removed from the so-called "sensational," or panorama play which depends almost solely upon its scenic and panoramic effects for whatever little interest it may possess. But though sensation may please for the moment, "the sacred names of friend, father, lover, husband, son, mother, of mankind in general, are," as Marmontel says, "far more pathetic than aught else, and retain their claims for ever." It is ever the same with us all, and those plays which are strong in their interest, dramatic in their purpose, and, withal, full of human nature, will always possess an interest for mankind.

Besides the humanity and purity of tone which pervades them, the plays produced by Wilson Barrett are remarkable for, firstly, the completeness with which they are set on the stage, and secondly, for the manner in which they are acted. (1) As a stage-manager, Mr. Barrett is probably unexcelled by any one. His pieces are always presented with the greatest possible care, and with the most scrupulous attention to every detail. The Borough scene in "The Lights o' London" was a marvel of stage-grouping and worthy in this respect of the much-vaunted skill of the Saxe-Meiningers. Instances of skilful management of the stage are plentiful in "The Silver King," but, in particular, a scene in the second act of that play may be pointed out. The stage represents the exterior of an inn, a solidly-built set, and this changes, in full sight of the audience and without a moment's delay, into a well-arranged room. In the matter of scenery and dresses the pieces produced at the Princess's Theatre are perfect. (2) As regards the acting of these plays, it is generally excellent, for the genius of the principal actor makes itself felt by his fellow artists, and helps to bring out the best qualities which they possess. Wilson Barrett infuses his lustre and his personality into all the people by whom he is surrounded, with the result that his company work in unison and with a will.

That Wilson Barrett possesses the ability to "create" a part he has proved before now, and he has also shown us that it is possible for an actor to idealize a common-place character or incident, and to elevate the author's work In relation to this latter power of the actor, Mr. Matthew Arnold has explained that "great artists like Talma and Rachel whose power as actors was far superior to the power as poets of

the dramatists whose work they were rendering, filled out with their own life and warmth the parts into which they threw themselves, gave body to what was meagre, fire to what was cold, and themselves supported the poetry of the French classic drama rather than were supported by it." This ability, this life and warmth, Mr. Barrett possesses in a marked degree. Every character which he undertakes he fills out with his own individuality, and thus often places it in a better position than had been given to it by the author. His art is versatile, and whatever he does, he does well. To confine ourselves to his London performances only, let us take, first of all, his Pomerol in "Fernande." It was an impersonation consistently calm, full of tact, good sense, and persuasiveness; an impersonation which stood out in strong contrast to the other characters in the play, by reason of its great vigour and strength of style. The thorough earnestness of the actor was manifest on this occasion, and his playing of the advocate at once struck home and called immediate attention to his abilities. Then witness the pathos and dignity of his acting as the Reverend Richard Capel in "A Clerical Error." Here was a clever and charming little play made all the more attractive because it possessed a sound actor for the exponent of its principal character. Mr. Barrett's trustworthy and versatile art was again manifest in the production of Mr. H. J. Byron's comedy "Courtship," when he acted the needy swell, Claude de Courcy.

Then came his Mercutio, a performance full of the glittering splendour of vitality, an impersonation full of lightness, intelligence and thought, in fact, the only complete realization of this complex character that can be called to mind. Mr. Barrett thoroughly understood the part; he had evidently bestowed on it a world of careful thought and diligent study, which, allied to intelligence of a high order, resulted in a personation full of brilliancy and colour, perfectly irresistible in its dazzling splendour. We now change from gay to grave, and come to his rendering of the tender, loving, monk, Friar John, in Mr. W. G. Wills's poetical play, "Juana." His portrayal of the calm, ascetic, self-sacrificing priest, was admirable in its fervour, in its tenderness, in its devotion. The scene in this play where the monk dreams at the organ was one of those touching moments never to be forgotten. In this piece, also, Mr. Barrett's excellent delivery of blank verse was especially noticeable, both on account of its

artistic method and elocution, and because the actor possesses a sweet and musical voice. His pathetic acting as the husband in "Frou-Frou," and the manliness and tenderness of his John Stratton in "The Old Love and the New," should also be remembered. In Harold Armytage, the wronged and suffering hero of "The Lights o' London," as presented by Wilson Barrett, we have the representation of a character full of pride, and tenderness, and passion. In the first act of the play we see him with his pride broken and his spirit crushed. But presently his pride is stung, his dauntless spirit is roused, and then comes another swift and sudden change when, with an infinity of tenderness he plucks a flower from the place where he has left his wife in safe shelter, and with a burst of passion rushes from the house. Then we see him again in the second act where, as the wrongfully-accused and escaped convict, he begs for shelter from the travelling showman, and pleads for his aid in order that he may once more see his wife. Again, watch the joyous meeting in the third act between Harold Armytage and his wife, and its sudden and fearful interruption. See him also in the fourth act, wandering with his starving wife through the pitiless London streets, and who is there that will not sympathize with the ill-used hero? Then, in the last part of the play, when the author of all the evil appears before him, the spirit of the man can stand his aggravation no longer, and it bursts forth in a torrent of passion. Of such acting as this it was that Goldsmith wrote of Garrick that he was "natural, simple, affecting," and, as Churchill said of the same actor, it displays a "thorough knowledge of the human heart."

But all Wilson Barrett's previous performances—clever and able as they have been—are cast into the shade by the genius of his Wilfrid Denver, the hero of Messrs. Henry A. Jones and Henry Herman's excellent play, "The Silver King." It is difficult to convey in mere words any precise idea of the depth and greatness of this impersonation. In order to accurately describe and analyze such a performance, the critic requires so keen a power of perception and appreciation that he may well ponder seriously before his task. It is not such a piece of acting as may be curtly dismissed in a sentence or two, but rather is it one of those bright pictures of finished art that mark the turning point in an actor's career, and places him far above the majority of his

fellow artists. By this time, the story of the play and the history of the principal character whose life constitutes that story, are probably well-known. Let us examine, then, the idea conveyed by the actor in the first scene of the drama. Wilfred Denver, as presented by Mr. Barrett, is no dissolute, crime-hardened reprobate, but an unfortunate man who has tasted the follies of life and is going rapidly down hill for the want of a firm and true friend to check his mad career. He is not a creature to be hated and despised, but a man to be pitied and loved by those who see and surround him. He is reckless, but not a scamp; he is intoxicated, but not a scoundrel; his love for his wife is brought prominently forward. The key-note to the character is struck with admirable skill by Mr. Barrett, and at the outset of the drama the actor firmly secures the entire sympathies of his audience. Thus the play has a capital start, and the novel and interesting situation at the end of the first act is led up to with everything, so far, in favour of the character and its impersonator. But, see, Denver is reviving from the effects of the chloroform so fiendishly administered to him. He is conscious of having struggled with some one, and of his purpose. He had come to shoot Geoffrey Ware. His senses are dazed, and he wants to go home to the wife who loves him so well. In searching for his hat, he comes across the body of the murdered man. Mark how cautiously he touches it at first. But what a sudden change of expression comes over his face when he finds that the heart no longer beats—the man is dead! It is a revelation of thought, and the terrible look of despair and anguish which passes over Mr. Barrett's features during this scene can only spring from genius. The depth and fearful meaning of the situation is realized to its utmost extent, and had Mr. Barrett done nothing else than this he would be entitled to be classed with the few really great actors of this century. But the part is bravely borne all through the play, and at the conclusion of the second act there is another remarkable instance of forcible and vivid acting. It comes in the scene where Denver learns that he is a free man, though dead to the world, dead to his wife. There is an infinite depth of pathos in this situation, and it is portrayed with noble art by Mr. Barrett. The expression of thanks to the Almighty for his deliverance from a fearful death, and his resolution to lead a new life, are beautiful points in the play, idealized and treated

with glowing effect by the actor. Then witness the quiet dignity of the white-haired hero when he returns after his four years of sorrow and bitter repentance for a crime which he has never committed. What a change has come over the man, and how beautifully it is expressed by the actor! All his passion and excitement have cooled down, and he is now aged and subdued by sorrow. He sees the wife he may not acknowledge, and kisses the child he may not own. The gentle pathos of the meeting between the father and child, and the touching recognition of his master by the faithful old servant, are dramatic moments of infinite value, and should be seen to be thoroughly felt and appreciated. Again, watch the contrast of the passion and pathos of the former scenes in the drama with the momentary lightness and gaiety displayed by Mr. Barrett in the opening of the last act. The Silver King, as Denver is called, has discovered that he is innocent of all crime. The long night of sorrow has passed, the day of happiness has arrived. The prospect of returning to the wife who believes him dead, with the good news of his innocence, lights up his face and brings joy to his careworn features. Last scene of all, comes the quiet and repose when the fugitive has returned home, and his character is proved stainless. The truth of the beautiful lines quoted from "In Memoriam,"

> "That men may rise on stepping-stones
> Of their dead selves to higher things,"

is illustrated, and the play ends in peace and calm. The spectator must, indeed, be callous who remains untouched by so excellent a play as "The Silver King," and so noble and great an impersonation as the Wilfrid Denver of Wilson Barrett.

Mr. Barrett's style of acting has many beauties, and it will not be out of place to call attention here to the chief of them. George the Third remarked of David Garrick that he "never could stand still—he was a great fidget." Now the repose of a great actor in moments of calm is seldom studied or, indeed, little, if ever, thought of. The artist, therefore, who has mastered this art of repose, deserves that his accomplishment should not be lightly passed over, and Wilson Barrett's repose is perfect. His attitudes are never exaggerated, his gestures are never out of place. Lessing complained of the actors of his own day that they spoilt everything by their gestures. They neither knew

when they should make any or of what kind. They usually made too many and too insignificant ones. The absence of restraint and repose on the stage was just as noticeable then as now. "When in an agitated scene," says Lessing, "the soul suddenly seems to collect itself to cast a reflective glance upon itself or that which surrounds it, it is natural that it should command all the movements of the body that depend upon its will. Not only the voice grows more composed, the limbs also fall into a condition of rest, to express the inner rest without which the eye of reason cannot well look about it. The unquiet foot treads more firmly, the arms sink, the whole body raises itself into an upright position; a pause—and then the reflection. The man stands there in solemn silence as if he would not disturb himself from hearing himself. . . . . Only the face during the reflection still retains the traces of agitation; mien and eye are still on fire and moved, for mien and eye are not so quickly within our control as foot and hand." This long translation may be pardoned, for it so aptly illustrates that calm and repose which come so readily to the command of Mr. Barrett. This repose is particularly observable in "The Lights o' London," in the scene where Harold Armytage is stung by his father's insults, and again where he comes face to face with the villain, Clifford. It is noticeable in "The Silver King," in the third act, where Wilfrid Denver enters, aged with sorrow, and ponders over the words, "Repentance! Pardon! Peace!" In the scene in the last act where Denver repels the overtures of the scoundrel through whom he has suffered so much, Mr. Barrett's repose is also absolutely perfect.

Another phase of art in which Mr. Barrett excels, is in the movements—always graceful and consistent—of his limbs. Hogarth has advised actors how to move their hands in beautiful undulatory lines, so as to make them supple in movement, and to make the movements of grace familiar to their arms. Had Hogarth lived to-day he might have pointed to Wilson Barrett as one of the most perfect actors in this respect, at least, that our stage possesses. Added to these accomplishments, he has a lithe figure, a handsome and expressive countenance, an eloquent eye, and a sweet and musical voice. But these gifts, to quote once more from Lessing, "are neither the only nor the greatest perfections of the actor. Valuable gifts of Nature are

very necessary to his calling, but they by no means suffice for it. He must everywhere think with the poet; he must even think for him in places where the poet has shown himself human." This necessary ability to think with and for the author must also be added to the list of Wilson Barrett's talents, for he has at all times and in whatever plays he has acted, shown himself to possess the capacity for thinking with, and for, and interpreting correctly, the work of the poet or dramatist.

I have endeavoured to show, however imperfectly, that Wilson Barrett is no ordinary actor, and that his aims are high. His work is always skilful and elaborate, his acting is marked by power and fine feeling, and his theatres are controlled with excellent judgment and taste. For a large share of its advancement the drama of to-day owes much to his well-directed efforts, and I do not think that I am wrong in placing him at the head and front of the English stage, and assigning him a position amongst the leaders of the drama and the greatest of actors.

Our Play-Box.

"LOVE AND MONEY."

A New and Original Drama, in a Prologue and Five Acts, by CHARLES READE, and HENRY PETTITT. Produced at the Adelphi Theatre, Saturday, November 18, 1882.

Colonel Clifford	... MR. JOHN RYDER.	John Towers ...	... MR. ANDERSON.
Robert Bartley	... MR. J. A. ARNOLD.	William Hope ...	... MR. J. H. CLYNDS.
Walter Clifford	... MR. W. R. SUTHERLAND.	Julia Clifford ...	... MISS SOPHIE EYRE.
Leonard Monkton	... MR. A. C. LILLY.	Lucy Monkton	... MISS B. FARQUHAR.
Percy Fitzroy ...	... MR. J. W. PIGOTT.	Rosa Brown ...	... MISS ASHLEY.
Ben Burnley ...	... MR. HARRY PROCTOR.	Nurse Parker ...	... MISS HEPPER.
Jem Seaton ...	... MR. H. COOPER.	Mary Bartley ...	... MISS AMY ROSELLE.
Tom Sydney ...	... MR. W. AVONDALE.		

THIS is a good, old-fashioned, nervous melodrama, with one fine scene. It is the kind of play that an Adelphi audience loves, and it has been so cleverly put together as to counteract the spirit of ridicule that burlesque has brought upon plays of excitement, rhetoric, and spirited action. Mr. Charles Reade believes in the school of melodrama that is hot, strong and to the point, and he dearly loves to allow music to accompany the movement of the play. This clever author never writes anything that is not worth listening to, and, on the whole, his collaboration with Mr. Pettitt has been attended with success. The current of the present story flows towards what has been generally called the

mine scene, intended to illustrate a touching incident in real life some years ago, when, after patient working and heroic endurance, some coal-miners buried alive in one of the workings were eventually rescued by their faithful companions. In this case, in order to save the life of his starving child, a workman, called Hope, allows his own infant to be substituted for the dead daughter of a rich but unscrupulous colliery proprietor, on the condition that Hope, who is a practical engineer, may assist in the business and watch over the child. Hope is the type of injured virtue, and the villains of the story plot against his life. But Hope's daughter, who in after years has discovered her real father, accidentally hears of a scheme to murder him, by causing an explosion in the mine. At the risk of her life the intrepid girl goes down into the mine to warn her father, and is herself caught in the trap that was laid for Hope alone. Then follows a scene of striking significance. The explosion takes place, and both daughter and father are left to die. No one is there with them in the awful and impenetrable darkness but the villain. Suddenly, when death is upon them, they hear the click of an advancing pick. Rescue is at hand when all was so nearly lost. The villain makes one desperate effort to flood the mine, but the wretched sufferers are rescued eventually, amidst the cheers of the delighted audience. It is difficult to convey an idea of the growing excitement, or of the climax of this remarkable scene so elaborately and successfully brought about. The motive is primarily good, and the result highly striking and picturesque. Such plays as these require strong, nervous, manly acting. They must be grasped boldly and attacked resolutely. This one in particular has brought forward for commendation Mr. J. H. Clynds—an actor very favourably known at the east end of London, whose style has not been spoiled by many years of transpontine acquaintance. As modest, no doubt, an actor, as Mr. Reynolds, of the Britannia, and Mr. J .B. Howe, of so many East-end theatres, Mr. Clynds has hitherto kept himself in the background. Now he has emancipated himself, as Mr. Fernandez and Mr. T. Thorne did before him. Miss Amy Roselle has, unfortunately, been very much out of health, but she shows her accustomed intelligence as the heroine of the play. It will be acted at Christmas-time, in connection with another charming play by Mr. Charles Reade, called "Rachel the Reaper," which is not known in London.

"IMPULSE."

A New Play by B. C. STEPHENSON. Founded on "La Maison du Mari."
First produced at the St. James's Theatre, on Saturday, December 9, 1882.

Mrs. Beresford ...	MRS. KENDAL.	Captain Crichton ...	MR. KENDAL.
Mrs. Macdonald ...	MISS LINDA DIETZ.	Victor de Riel	MR. ARTHUR DACRE.
Miss Kilmore ...	MRS. GASTON MURRAY.	Graham	MR. BRANDON.
Mrs. Birkett ...	MISS COWLE.	Parker	MR. DRUMMOND.
Sir Henry Auckland	MR. BEAUMONT.	Waiter	MR. DE VERNEY.
Colonel Macdonald	MR. T. N. WENMAN.		

IT was curious to observe how the whole audience shied at this play before they had heard a line of it uttered. The author, Mr. B. C. Stephenson, had said that it was founded on "La Maison du Mari." That was quite enough for the audience. See how an author is fettered! If he says no word about his inspiration he is ferreted out by some consequential person as a plagiarist. If he avows that he is not strictly original, he is considered a purveyor of immoral literature. Oh! these humbugs; these English people; do they know that "Box and Cox," that racy old English farce, is a French play in foundation and in whole pages of dialogue? If you doubt me, read "Frisette." Do they know that the most popular plays in our language can be traced to something that is not English? Do they convince themselves even of the fact that scarcely one plot in Shakspeare is his own? Not a bit of it; they ignorantly imagine that a French play must necessarily be immoral, and they cast stones at it accordingly. But how about the "Maison du Mari?" Not a living soul in the theatre had ever heard of it. No one knew when it was produced, or when it was acted, or who played in it. Yet they pretended to argue that "Impulse" must be an improper play because it was founded on the French, and must be wholly French because it is *founded* on a French play. Indeed, inspired by this laudable ambition to reserve the stage of England for the feeble efforts of incompetent playwrights, there were some in the audience prepared to hiss before the very first scene was developed. They had nastiness in their minds and they wanted to fasten it on the poor play. Push this ridiculous theory to an absurdity. A Molière arises in France, a Goethe in Germany, a Shakspeare in England. These geniuses are not to be interchangeable. No country may take up an author born abroad. We may read French novels and German books, but never see a French play. The genius of a Sardou is to be denied to us. We may not admire his dramatic talent. It is a crime! Each country is to stick to its

own dull mediocrity. The whole theory about French plays is nonsense. The audience wants a good play, an amusing play, an emotional play, a witty play, and does not care one snap of the fingers who inspired the author so long as they are amused. If the author can so utilize a French play as to amuse and interest an English audience, well and good; the audience does not require anything better, believe me.

I will tell you a story. A Mrs. Macdonald is dawdling her life out with her family down at Brakespeare. Her father, an old hunting squire, idolizes her. Her widowed sister, Mrs. Beresford, pets and patronizes her. She is a strange, affectionate creature, and she wants to be loved. But why is she not loved and satisfied, seeing that she has a husband? Well, Colonel Macdonald elects to serve for three years as a volunteer at the Cape instead of loving his wife, and the consequence is that she is fascinated by Victor de Riel, a handsome Frenchman. It is all very wrong; but the poor woman cannot help it. She wants to be loved by someone, and to put it neatly the Frenchman interests her whilst her husband is away. The Frenchman is so interested in her that he proposes to elope with her, and she refuses until she hears that her husband is to return on that very day. And then she consents. So like a woman. She believes her husband has heard the voice of infidelity in her heart. She does run away and makes a wretched business of it, for when she has eloped she is met by her husband instead of her lover—and there is a scene! She has done no real harm, and her husband takes her back to his home, but not to his heart. All goes on steadily again. The family is still united, and Colonel Macdonald only wants a good chance of making friends with his wife, when Victor de Riel, now blossomed into a Count de Something—his father being dead—appears upon the scene. He tries to force the wretched woman to fulfil her promise; to love him still; but finding that she is contrite, he threatens. He says he will call out her husband and shoot him unless she consents to introduce him to her household. And she is weak enough to yield. Such a villain must come to condemnation, and the rest of the play is devoted to securing his punishment. Colonel Macdonald interrupts an interview, when his wife acknowledges her steadfast love for her husband, takes her to his heart, and, *exit* villain. What is there then immoral in this story, and why should it not be

English life as well as French life? I cannot say; but I am certain that the English people will go and see the play.

I should like to linger on the performance of Miss Linda Dietz, because I consider it so remarkably good. The play in essence is the life of Mrs. Macdonald, and from the first moment that Miss Dietz stepped upon the stage she interested you in the play. The eye followed her, the heart felt for her. She was just the woman the author intended to represent. She was weighed down with the depression that love gives. She was not herself. She was tired and weary and reflective. The performance came as a surprise, because English actresses of ambition have left off thinking. They play their parts: they do not think them. Take away Mrs. Bancroft, Mrs. Kendal, and Miss Terry, and how few are left? If Miss Linda Dietz chooses to play again as well as this, she will make a great name, for art like hers is wanted. Mr. Wenman, as the husband of this tender, affectionate woman, was admirable; and Mr. Arthur Dacre, in the most difficult character in the whole play, surprised even his warmest admirers. He had it in his power to ruin the play, and he saved it. Such a villain as that inartistically treated would have collapsed the whole thing; but Mr. Dacre was equal to the occasion. If any one wants to see good comedy acting, not farcical buffoonery, let them study Mr. and Mrs. Kendal and Mrs. Gaston Murray in this play. Nothing better of its kind has been seen for years; it is the most delicate humour conceivable. Mr. Beaumont fits well into this clever company; and all I can say is, that if I were consulted about the kind of play to see—as I very often am—I should say "Impulse," certainly. The matrons would be amused; the maids would like it. It is a good play, and it is as well acted as anything we have seen for many years.

Correspondence.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

Sir,—In your extract from Mr. Boucicault's letter he says, "This is an organized gang who attend the performance of all important plays. With what object they conspire I have not heard." It would be strange if he had, seeing that the conspiracy exists in his imagination, and would be extremely annoying were it not so absurd.

Mr. Boucicault goes on to say that the managers of the Vaudeville, the Court, and the Criterion had vainly protested against this conspiracy till Mr. Henderson took the business in hand, and packed the pit on a certain first night. Now, in my humble opinion, the Vaudeville management has dealt even more successfully with the pit. Instead of "packing the pit" it has given us sterling, well-acted plays, and a steady policy, and since then I fancy there has been no talk of conspiracy.

But though I do not suppose *you* entertain the idea of the first-nighters being "an organized gang," still you think that of late the pit has not been alive to its great responsibilities, that it has failed in generosity and candour, and that intelligence and judgment are wanting among us. It may be so. But when, during the last three years, has not the verdict of the pit, when it has in any way condemned a play, been endorsed by the critics next day? I think of the first nights of "Cobwebs," "Jacks and Jills," "Branded," "Mimi," "Dust," "The Manager," and I look back at the critiques (for I do not throw them in the waste-paper basket), and I see there the decidedly adverse verdict of the pit on all those plays fully confirmed. Can any one pretend to say that "The Manager" did not deserve the severe reception it met with? although "Mimi" was laughed at, at the same theatre, but the laughter was not confined to pit and gallery, and it was well deserved. But "Honour," "Awaking," and "The Parvenu" were received without disturbance, though the first-mentioned played till so late an hour that most who had trains to catch were unable to see the end. How did we receive "Juana?" a play—whatever its dramatic faults may be—full of passion and poetry, far above our heads; were we the unthinking, noisy, conspirators that we are reputed to be? We welcomed "Juana" with delight, and wondered at playgoers allowing it to be taken off so soon. It was not the pit who killed "Juana." Then, "The Cynic." I do not think there was a sound of dissent on the first night of "The Cynic," and I have never come across a pittite who did not admire the play. Yet that was not the simplest, easiest play to understand, but one that required some little thought and intelligence. If we are so utterly without feeling and reverence might we not have raised a laugh at many a line in "The Squire," where religion and sentiment are touched upon, or in "The Silver King," where there are allusions that are voted slow and goody-goody, now-a-days?

for free-thinking, or, perhaps, on-the-surface-atheism, if I may so express it, is not a monopoly by any particular class now that all conditions of men read and hear of all sorts of books.

There is no denying that the Laureate's play was received irreverently on that fatal Saturday evening, but I think there is something to be said in extenuation even here. The play was a great disappointment. Expectation had been rife so long; from all accounts the tragedy was to be so grand yet so simple and pathetic; we had had such visions of the "Earl who was fair to see," and the vengeful sister; the heavy price that had been paid for the work seemed to ensure that it was good; and then it began, and sentence by sentence it displayed its weakness. Some of the more sober of us recognized charming thoughts here and there, but the play had the fatal effect of boring the majority of an audience that had already suffered from various causes. We forgot then it was the work of a great poet, and we expressed our opinion as we should have done had the author been any other. After all, we go to the theatre because we love the play, and it matters little to us who writes, as long as the play is good we have no prejudice for or against the author for any previous work.

I am afraid I have said more than enough already, and yet I should like to say one thing more, and that is, while everything is expected from the pit, very little is granted to it; and I think if managers considered they would see there is much to upset the temper of that part of the house before the play begins. We stand long hours to get a good place—of course that is our own affair, and no one would wish to have it altered—but at the end of this long wait it is hard to find the front row already half full, as is sometimes the case. The entrances to most of the pits are awkward, if not, as is the case at the Globe and Savoy, positively dangerous. When we do get in we have to listen to a weary farce that is an insult to common sense. As soon as the curtain rises the stalls begin to come in, and for the next ten minutes we are annoyed by the passing to and fro and the sitting down of the late comers; perhaps we lose the thread of the play and get careless and fidgety. The pit is not a particularly comfortable place now-a-days, pushed away as it is under the dress-circle, and generally consisting of bare backless benches; and, perhaps, this helps to keep away the elder men who might steady us. Then, if managers are so greedy as to pack people into seats behind pillars, and in corners where they cannot see, they are dull, and will most certainly become noisy. I do not think there are often disturbances where the management is more considerate. Finally, we are rebuked and blamed in the papers with never a chance of standing up for ourselves, unless you give it us, as I hope you will this time, and believe me, yours truly,

A. HARVEY.

Imitations of German Lays and Ballads.

"DER TOD UND DER SAEUFER."

(WIELAND.)

YESTERN, brothers—who would think it!—
As I raised my wine to drink it,
Just imagine my affright!
Death called on me yesternight.

Threat'ningly his scythe he shook,
Sternly spoke, with awful look;
"Hence, thou slave to wine! enough!
Thou hast drunk thy *quantum suff.*"

"Ah! friend Death," I stammered, sobbing,
"Wilt thou me of life be robbing?
See! there's wine at thy behest;
Gracious Death, ah! let me rest!"

Straight he seized the brimming cup,
Grimly smiled, and drank it up,
Yea, unto the utmost drain—
Grinning, set it down again.

"Sure," thought I, "I am respited,"
But my hopes he quickly blighted.
"Fool! dost think a draught of wine
Can save thee from becoming mine?"

"Death!" I gasped, "my chief ambition
Is to be a great physician.
Let me live! All patients mine
To thy clutches I'll consign."

"Well, if that's your game, my hearty,
From your patients I'll not part ye.
Till of wine and kisses weary
Live!—till then I won't come near ye!"

Oh! how sweet his sentence sounded—
With new life my bosom bounded.
Brave old Death! one bumper more—
Friends are we for evermore.

Thus my life shall finish never!
Bacchus! I shall live for ever!
Ever live for Love and Wine,
Love and Wine be ever mine.

WM. BEATTY-KINGSTON.

Our Omnibus Box.

OUT of the scores of letters I have received on the subject of first-night audiences there is one complaint so serious that it would be well if managers would look to it at once and put an end to it for ever. It is deliberately stated that priority of admission is granted to certain favoured individuals, and that when the public—the great paying public—rushes in after waiting for hours and hours at the doors they find the seats for which they have so patiently waited secured by those who are not entitled to them. If this be so, managers cannot be surprised if a spirit of impatience and dissatisfaction reigns throughout the house. A pittite, however enthusiastic, would be a miracle of patience if he could endure standing in the cold and wet from four o'clock in the afternoon only to see that he had been forestalled and to know that he must wait until nine o'clock in the evening before he can get any decent dramatic food. And then of course the long waits and the miserable music are enough to vex a saint. But listen to another tale, put forward by a correspondent:—"The unfortunate reception of the play of the Poet Laureate on its production, was due in a great measure to the tardiness of the commencement and to the long waits between the acts. The pit became impatient with the constant repetition of 'that gavotte' played by the orchestra. If they had been amused they would not have thought of 'their trains and their trams.' There was not the slightest sign of impatience on the opening night of 'Iolanthe,' although the opera was not concluded till a quarter before midnight, and some of the pittites had been waiting since four o'clock in the afternoon. These, on entering the theatre, found the first three rows in the centre of the pit occupied, and a policeman on duty, who was told by one of the attendants that—'if they kicked up a row to turn them out.' Of course a management has every right to fill the pit and gallery, if it chose, before the doors are opened; but I maintain that any one who has the patience to wait from four till eight at a pit door deserves a front seat. If the front rows are filled there ought to be a notice placed on the door to that effect, in order that the pittites may not enter the theatre in a dissatisfied and ill-humoured frame of mind."

The wretched, miserable, and tasteless music given by the orchestra is, I am confident, the reason of much discontent. If the play is dull and lugubrious the orchestra is sure to add depression to the dulness between the acts. They are too fond of playing the tune that the old cow died of, and it seldom occurs to a leader of a theatrical orchestra that when the curtain is down the spirits of the audience should be kept up. Instead of making the people merry they make them howl. And they play the same tune over and over again till impatience is inevitable. The gods will not endure "damnable iteration," but no manager apparently dreams of seeing how far the entr'acte music inter-

feres with the progress of his play. He leaves it to the conductor blindly. Hence these tears! It is a pleasure to go to the Court or Adelphi Theatres because the music is arranged on an intelligent plan by Herr Carl Armbrüster and by Mr. Oscar Barrett. They don't weary the audiences: they delight them. At the same time, should not the pit discountenance and discourage the irreverent spirit of "chaff" that prevails on first nights. It sounds very clever, no doubt, to make some cutting remark at the expense of the author, the actor, or the management; and it may be consolatory to the wag to see the fact duly chronicled in his favourite journal. But, after all, rudeness is the easiest of all modern accomplishments; it is far quicker acquired than politeness. Let the pit be just, stern, prompt to put down insolence, carelessness, or unworthiness of any kind, but let it be merciful. A play that has cost years of anxious labour and hours of thought, may be ruined by the careless joke that comes to the tongue, but is resisted by all who understand what mercy is. There are some people who literally appear to come to the theatre in order to discover what they can ridicule, not what they can admire. Such people are a nuisance, and they ought to be told so by their companions.

I invited correspondence on the subject of first-night audiences and the atmosphere of discontent that has prevailed of late, and am always glad to give publicity to views however diametrically opposed they may be to my own. There is a good deal of sound common sense in the following letter, though I cannot shake off the idea that a certain reverence should be extended to our Tennysons however mistaken, and our Victor Hugos however extravagant. After all they are great men:—"In reference to your remarks, anent the 'Promise of May,' and the first night's reception of that uninteresting play, is not the simple question involved whether or not an audience should treat a drama from the pen of a man of such eminence as Alfred Tennyson, differently from the work of what one may call an every-day-dramatist? You say that if the 'mob of gentlemen' had been alive to the fact that the work in question was that of the author of 'In Memoriam,' it would have been treated with 'ordinary respect.' But is it not the fact that it *was* so treated and *therefore* necessarily condemned, though with greater ridicule than can be defended. If *extra* ordinary respect had been shown on account of the position of the author, it seems to me such a course would have been not only to encourage poor *stage* workmanship, but to treat unfairly the every-day-dramatists, and had the audience not expressed freely their feelings, the verdict would have been most misleading. In a word, if a Poet Laureate chooses to write for the stage, why is he not to be judged by the rules and in the manner adopted in the cases of other writers? It must, however, be granted that the management seemed to have done all in their power to render the audience, particularly the pit, uncomfortable, and to put them in a discontented frame of mind. The agony suffered by the pittites in getting in was something to be remembered and acutely felt at the time, and then the tedious waits and poor music were very trying. But allowing for all this, can it be denied that the verdict given on the first night was not correct, though perhaps too pro-

nounced? I, for one, sincerely wish Mrs. Beere better luck in her next venture, and most truly regret the failure of her present plucky attempt."

A Correspondent, who bitterly complains of my "verbosity," forwards me a letter of five folio pages in reply to it, warmly defending the attitude of the audiences towards the "Promise of May." This is scarcely consistent. I wish I had room for my friend's essay, but as I like fair play I will only quote those passages in which I am more directly alluded to; but I would venture to refer the writer to a "Symposium" on this important question in one of the earliest numbers of The Theatre, and my continued support of that time-honoured institution to show he has been hasty in drawing the conclusion he has :—"Doubtless you grimly reflected with much satisfaction whilst penning those sweeping denunciations, that your opinions would be allowed to pass unchallenged by any one individual of this seemingly despised 'organized gang,' and it is clearly evident you firmly believed in the sheer impossibility of one of the number attempting to justify past behaviour. Such, however, is my task. With great advantage the length of the attack in December's number might have been compressed into fewer words. I was present on the evening in question, and as this evening forms the basis of the statements on the one side, other and contrary impressions may as well be recorded. I grant that at times it was an uproarious assemblage, but was there not cause for the exhibitions of feeling indulged in? I venture to suggest your application of the term 'uproarious' would have served every and any purpose, without entering into details, the grace of which cannot have an otherwise effect than that of causing an intense admiration of the structure of the verbosity combined with a rich appreciation of the writer's gift of descriptive narration. An uncalled-for and much exaggerated infliction. There was not the slightest need for the abusive manner adopted; bare assertions form no argument. It has been a good opportunity for again making this praiseworthy charge against the 'first nighters.' Prejudice, ever prejudice! Do we ever hear a note made of the *approval* of the 'first nighters?' No! never. Only when deserving disapproval is given vent to, some captious critic, with finely strung nerves, takes upon himself the responsibility of finding fault—as has been proved many times before—bringing into prominence a body of experienced playgoers, who flatter themselves they. by this time, possess sufficient discrimination to elect from a selection of plays which they prefer. In 1860 'The Promise of May' would have been hissed off the stage. As it was, the play was listened to eagerly and quietly the moment the curtain went up, but immediately after the entrance of Edgar, the true vein was touched, and the house—ay, even some of the most distinguished company—*laughed* at the 'ambitious but unconventional' production. Mr. Dion Boucicault's 'outspokenness' is scarcely worthy of comment, betraying, as it does, an assumed profound ignorance of the matter of which he writes."

To sum up this pit question. A writer in the *Evening News* in his proper judgment has assumed that I am antagonistic to the institution of the pit, its rights, its privileges, its duties, and its influence. There never was a more mistaken assumption. Anyone who cares to turn to the "Era

Almanack of 1875," and there reads "A Plea for the Pit," and any one who remembers the strong part I took in the controversy that arose on the abolition of the pit at the Haymarket Theatre, will acquit me of any such charge. But I am not a playgoer of merely to-day, as are many of my correspondents. I have not missed an important first night in London since the month of May, 1860—nearly twenty-three years ago—and I presume I may be allowed to know something of the subject of which I speak, and to notice any strong change in public manners. What I said was, and what I say is, that the occasional insolence of the minority is not checked by the often good sense of the majority. What I said was, and what I say is, that the disposition—the growing disposition—of the minority is to jeer, to flout, to scorn, and to ridicule. The tendency of the house is not to be tolerant in judgment, but to be hasty. The reverential spirit in the audience is discouraged. That the majority of good fellows has the power to exercise a check over careless ribaldry cannot be doubted. I believe this very controversy has borne good fruit. The other night at the St. James's Theatre there was a tendency to hiss and scorn in the very first act of "Impulse." It was the careless speed of the minority. But the majority put it down, stamped upon the fire and extinguished it at once. The consequence was that a clever play was listened to with patience, and received with enthusiasm by the whole house.

The pittite thinks he has a grievance. The managers of combined London think that the experience of several years past entitles them to a very serious complaint. I don't pretend to decide the question, but I will favour my friends with a few facts. I say this, and I defy contradiction, that it is the custom where a play has failed, and has caused discontent to the whole house, to call out the author in order to hiss him. I say honestly that I think this custom both cowardly and cruel. It is opposed to all English ideas of fair play. To fail is not a crime to be rewarded with public execration. It is bad enough for a wretched author to go home miserable, without being hooted like a despised dog. I can recall an instance where an author had written an historical play that did not meet with the approval of the audience, though it was not altogether contemptible in a literary sense. The pit and gallery called out that unfortunate author in order to hiss and hoot at him for failing. Having some self-respect he refused to come out. They followed him up to theatre after theatre, and, finding him out one night sitting in the stalls with a lady, they called out his name during a silent entr'acte, and groaned and jeered at him till they were hoarse. I say that conduct was both unworthy and ungenerous, and I say further that there was not one man found in that whole audience to protect—not the man—but the lady who was insulted through him. These instances are exceptional no doubt, but they illustrate what I meant when I asserted that the pit, being a good institution, like the House of Commons, should respect its traditions, and advocate fair play to manager, to author, to actor, to actress, to individuals. There has always been the spirit of fair-play, but gratuitous rudeness and idle chaff have been permitted to go unchecked too long. *Verbum sat sapienti!*

The marriage of Mdlle. Hortense Schneider, "Grand Duchesse de Geroldstein," to the Italian Marquis de Bionno, has recalled to mind an old anecdote concerning the once universally-adored queen of opera bouffe. As Boulotte, in the first act of "Barbe-Bleu," when the piece was first produced, she used to eat real cherries, and as the run of the opera continued long after the season for this fruit, it was not without some difficulty and much cost that the juicy berries were found for her, as they were. Now, la belle Hortense was accustomed every evening to throw the stone of one of her cherries amongst the audience, generally in the direction of one of her adorers, who delightedly hastened to put it into his waistcoat-pocket, for preservation as a charming memento. One evening, one of the much sought cherry-stones fell by chance into the hands of a gentleman who was not a proclaimed adorer of the bewitching actress, who thought he could turn it to better use than that to which another might put it. He planted the precious stone, and, thanks to his careful culture, there grew from it a vigorous, and, in time, fruit-bearing tree; but it was not till four or five years had elapsed that Mdlle. Schneider learned the fate of this one of her cherry-stones, on the gentleman who had reared it sending her a basketful of its first-fruits—a present regularly continued every year, but (may we successfully "defy augury?") no more to be renewed. Boulotte has become Madame la Marquise de Bionno, but, at the first approach of the breath of the past winter, the cherry-tree, which may be said to have owed its life to her, withered and died—it is even said, on the day of her wedding.

One day, while fulfilling an engagement at St. Petersburgh, one of the most charming of the actresses of Paris took a fancy to go for a ride in a hired vehicle with one of her friends. The driver was a handsome young man of distinguished appearance. Conversing with her friend aloud, the pretty Parisienne said: "How extremely good-looking he is! What a pity he is a foreigner, and only knows Russian—a language so unpoetical. I should so much have liked to converse with him." Her friend made a sign to her that the handsome coachman might hear what she was saying. "Bah! he does not understand French. I declare I've quite fallen in love with him!" The ride ended, the impulsive little Parisienne gave the handsome young Russian an extra gratuity, probably too large, for on receiving it he was actually moved to return thanks, which he did in these terms, in excellent French: "Madame est trop bonne!" The expression which suddenly came into the face of that charming young Parisian actress was something to see!

At one of Rossini's parties, a lady who had been asked to sing allowed herself to be much pressed before consenting, but finally gave way, and said she would attempt an air from "Sémiramide." Passing the maestro on her way to the piano, she whispered to him: "I'm so fearful of not doing justice to your divine music!" "What must *I* be?" asked Rossini.

There is one scene in "The Silver King" that causes such profound attention, and that contains some writing that has been so universally praised, that I am sure many of my readers will be obliged to me for being able to quote it for their guidance and enjoyment. We hear so much of an unliterary and unlovely drama, that it is only fair to pick out the plums when they do exist. The scene I quote is the one in which Wilfred Denver, banished from his wife and family, describes to his old faithful servant, Jaikes, the terrors of a conscience-haunted sleep.

DENVER. Stay. I fell asleep. Jaikes, you don't know what a murderer's sleep is? It is the waking time of conscience! It is the whipping-post she ties him to while she lashes and stings and maddens his poor helpless guilty soul! Sleep? It is a bed of spikes and horrors! It is a precipice for him to roll over, sheer upon the jags and forks of memory! It is a torchlight procession of devils raking out every infernal sewer and cranny of his brain! It is ten thousand mirrors dangling round him to picture and repicture to him nothing but himself! Sleep! Oh God there is no hell but sleep!

JAIKES. Master Will! My poor Master Will.

DENVER. That's what my sleep has been these four years past. I fell asleep and I dreamed that we were over in Nevada, and we were seated on a throne, she and I, and all the people came to offer us their homage and loving obedience. And it was in a great hall of justice, and a man was brought before me charged with a crime; and just as I opened my mouth to pronounce sentence upon him, Geoffrey Ware came up out of his grave with his eyes staring, staring, staring, as they stared at me on that night, and as they will stare at me till my dying day; and he said "Come down! Come down you whited sepulchre! How dare you sit in that place to judge men?" And he leapt up in his grave-clothes to the throne where I was, and seized me by the throat and dragged me down, and we struggled and fought like wild beasts. We seemed to be fighting for years, and at last I mastered him, and held him down and throttled him, and rammed him tight into his grave again, and kept him there and wouldn't let him stir, and then I saw a hand coming out of the sky, a long bony hand with no flesh on it, and nails like eagle's claws, and it came slowly out of the sky reaching for miles it seemed: slowly, slowly it reached down to the very place where I was and it fastened in my heart, and it took me and set me in the justice hall in the prisoners' dock, and when I looked at my judge it was Geoffrey Ware! And I cried out for mercy, but there was none! And the hand gripped me again as a hawk grips a wren, and set me on the gallows, and I felt the plank fall from under my feet, and I droped, dropped, dropped,—and I awoke!

JAIKES. For mercy's sake, Master Will, no more.

DENVER. Then I knew that the dream was sent for a message to tell me that though I should fly to the uttermost ends of the earth, as high as the stars are above, or as deep as the deepest sea bed is below, there is no hiding-place for me, no rest, no hope, no shelter, no escape!

But there is one line in "The Silver King" even finer than that—a line that everyone is quoting. The vision-haunted murderer in an agony of despair says: "Oh God, put back thy universe and give me yesterday!" What man has not thought that, but who has so expressed it before?

Our readers have taken such an interest in the flourishing and successful School of Dramatic Art, and so many pupils are entering their names at 7, Argyll Street, Regent Street, that I may be allowed to call attention to the fact that the second and most important term begins on January 3, 1883. This is by far the best term for pupils to join, as the instruction goes on without any break until August 18. The first public performance of the pupils will be a very interesting occasion.

The Philothespian Club gave a most successful performance, on the 9th inst., at St. George's Hall. The pieces represented were J. W. Robertson's "Ladies' Battle," and W. S. Gilbert's "Creatures of Impulse." In the former, Mrs. V. Sandford (Countess d'Autreval) made excellent use of the character assigned to her, as did also Mrs. Arthur Masters (Léonie). Of the gentlemen, Messrs. H. Stacke (Baron de Montrichard) and W. L. Hallwood rendered good service by the careful manner in which they performed their respective parts. Mr. W. S. Matthews was most amusing as the vacillating de Grignon, and Messrs. F. Upton, W. M. Waterton, and A. A. Wickens, satisfactorily made up the remaining portion of the cast. Gilbert's piece concluded the programme, and the members in this well sustained their reputation. A topical duet by Mr. G. H. Phillips (Bomblehardt) and Mr. H. Cox (Peter) was deservedly well received; a graceful allusion to the public generosity, in the case of the Alhambra disaster, being loudly cheered. Another line or two, inserted with questionable taste, referring in very disrespectful terms to a most prominent member of the Cabinet was as coldly and, in some cases, objectionably received. The nightingale's song by Mrs. H. Cox (Pipette) won an enthusiastic encore which it well merited. Misses E. Rothsay and K. Erlam filled the parts of Martha and A Strange Old Lady respectively, and Mr. T. J. Lowe (Sergt. Klooque) and Mr. C. H. Coffin (Jaques) acted in a highly creditable manner. The chorus also did very well, largely assisted by the pianist Mr. F. A. Broxholm. Mr. Cox is to be congratulated on his effective stage management.

"What author can be fairly judged by a play one-half of which is deliberately suppressed?" asks Mr. W. S. Gilbert, and proceeds to argue that Shakspeare is not appreciated, and that "Hamlet" is not understood by the playgoing public, because the play is not acted precisely as written. This whimsical satirist has positively got it into his head, or, at any rate, pretends to believe, that, "if such an outrage were perpetrated on a play by Mr. Tom Taylor, it would be regarded as an insult to his memory!" There are various methods of ridding the stage of Shakspeare. Ridicule having failed, it having been proved nonsense to say that "Shakspeare could not write a play for the nineteenth century," the latest weathercock device is to excite the public to hoot the manager who does not court absolute failure by acting Shakspeare *verbatim et literatim*. Is there one single play that has held the stage for a hundred years that is now acted as written? Is "The School for Scandal?" Is "The Rivals?" Is "She Stoops to Conquer?" Can any one single stage classic be quoted that is acted literally as written? and who wants them to be so acted? Is the stage to be deprived of Sheridan and Goldsmith in obedience to an impracticable whim? Don't add words, for goodness sake; don't Cibberize or Garrickize; don't attempt to "paint the lily or gild refined gold;" don't improve upon Shakspeare—but why not take away, lop out, excise, rearrange, and make practicable what would otherwise be lost to the stage? I disagree with Mr. Gilbert *toto cœlo*. I hope that Mr. Henry Irving, with his reverential treatment and true appreciation of Shakspeare, will go on

giving us acting editions by the dozen, and producing more plays as beautifully, as sensibly, and as intelligently as he has done "Hamlet," "Merchant of Venice," "Romeo and Juliet," and "Much Ado About Nothing." There are stage editors and stage editors.

Mr. Irving has done more to encourage the love of Shakspeare among the people than any actor who ever lived. Supposing it be true, as Mr. Gilbert hints, that no one knows anything about Shakspeare until they go to the theatre—well, granted all that, having gone to the theatre, they surely take down the book and study the discarded lines whose omission is supposed to be such an "outrage," but if they did not see Shakspeare on the stage, they would probably never be induced to study the book. Mr. Irving's good work is before the world, and I really do not think that anyone desires to "tear up his benches" for his irreverence. On the contrary, I believe that there are hundreds and thousands of playgoers who would like to see Mr. Bancroft or Mr. Hare doing for comedy—old English comedy—exactly what Mr. Irving is doing for Shakspeare. There are volumes of good plays on our theatrical bookshelves absolutely lost to the stage for want of editing and rearrangement. *Autres temps, autres mœurs*, in plays as in everything else. No, no, my dear Mr. Gilbert, if authors, modern authors, clever authors, would only allow their plays to be altered more than they do, to be cut and trimmed more than they will, the stage and the public would be the gainers. Then we should have no "Promise of Mays." Not a play is ever acted that has not to be cut after it is produced. It is not cut before, because the author naturally loves his offspring. But I suppose this is only another joke by Mr. Gilbert—a topsy-turvydom or criticism served up for the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*' Christmas number, which, I may here remark, is quite admirable. I like Christmas numbers that have a lot of short stories and sketches by clever men, and I would cordially recommend the instant perusal of the hunting story by the editor, Mr. Alfred E. T. Watson—admirably told—and the ghost story of Mr. Herbert Gardner, in excellent taste and style; and everyone should read, of course, Mr. Gilbert's "Unappreciated Shakspeare," but not be misled by it.

On December 2, the Glow Worms' Amateur Dramatic Society gave a performance of a new adaptation of "On ne Badine pas avec l'Amour," by Alfred de Musset, written by Mr. John Whitaker, jun., and entitled "Love Brooks no Jesting." For an amateur, the work was fairly done; the principal faults being that it contained too many scenes, and an exuberance of dialogue. A long speech at the close of the first act was particularly noticeable and should be immediately cut down. It was, on the whole, efficiently acted, and the performance of Mr. A. Drinkwater was excellent.

By-the-way, the article on "The Silver King" which recently appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, was written by Mr. Matthew Arnold, under the signature of "An Old Playgoer."

Mr. Hamilton Aïdé has written a neat and cleverly constructed little comedy, called "Cousins," which has been played on three occasions at Sir Percy Shelley's private Theatre, in Tite-street, Chelsea, for the benefit of the School for Dramatic Art. It is a play of manners and conversation rather than of action, and the necessary spin that such a dramatic top requires was given it by Mrs. Cecil Clay, whose loss to the regular stage in pure comedy is very great. She acted with remarkable finish and intelligence, and with an irresistible sparkle so seldom found now-a-days. Mrs. Keeley, Mrs. John Wood, Mrs. Arthur Stirling, and Miss Genevieve Ward were in the audience, and were delighted. The performance on the whole was far better than is usually found with amateurs. Miss Mary Boyle is a born comic actress, and Mr. Claude Ponsonby one of the best young light comedians I have seen on the amateur stage for some time. Sir Percy Shelley has received notice of an information laid against him for allowing a performance in his theatre for which money was, in the words of the Act, "directly or indirectly taken." So there will be an end of all charity performances at private houses for the future.

Frances Maria Kelly, who has long outlived her generation of art, has passed away, in her quiet little home at Feltham, before she could enjoy the grant of money generously placed at her disposal by the Prime Minister. The gifted lady, who lived to the extraordinary age of 93, was solaced in her last hours by the affectionate attention of Mr. Henry Irving and Mr. J. L. Toole, who visited her on more than one occasion, and of Mr. Charles Kent, the genial gentleman and graceful poet, who was the friend and oft companion of Charles Dickens. To the last the good old soul conversed of her friendship with Munden, Liston, Edmund Kean, and many more, and gave to each one of the friends I have mentioned some little memento of the actors of the past, coupled with affectionate words they are not likely to forget. Miss Kelly was born at Brighton on 15th December, 1790; she died within a few days of her birthday in 1882. Her father was an officer in the army, and brother to Michael Kelly, under whom she studied music and singing. Miss Kelly made her first appearance on the boards of a theatre at a very early age as a member of the chorus at Drury Lane. Her *début* as an actress was at Glasgow in 1807. In 1808 she was a member of Mr. Colman's company at the Haymarket. Subsequently she appeared at the English Opera House under Mr. Arnold's management. She earned many laurels as a singer, succeeding to several of the characters which had been filled by Madame Storace. From the English Opera House she went to Drury Lane. Whilst performing at that theatre she was fired at by a lunatic in the pit, when a scene of extraordinary excitement ensued. The man was subsequently tried for the murderous attempt, but acquitted on the ground of insanity. A similar attempt was afterwards made upon her life in Dublin, fortunately with no greater success. Miss Kelly was an actress of great versatility and talent. She was successful in the comedy parts filled by Mrs. Jordan, and still more in domestic melodrama. Hazlitt says of Miss Kelly: "In the

roundness of her limbs, the ease and grace of her motions, and the entire absence of anything sharp or angular in her form, she resembles Miss O'Neill, like whom she is formed to succeed best in characters where passion and suffering have taken possession of the soul." Her singing reminded Hazlitt of Miss Stephens. She built the Royalty Theatre, in Dean Street, Soho, long known as Miss Kelly's Theatre, but derived nothing from her enterprise.

There is an admirable account in the *World* of "Fédora," the new Sardou play in which Sara Bernhardt appears to have made such a triumph. The plot is clearly and succinctly stated, and the whole excitement of the drama put boldly before the eyes. I have no doubt we shall see "Fédora" in London sooner or later. Indeed I know for certain that Mr. Bancroft has bought the English acting right. But who is to play Fédora? The part appears to require a tragic actress of immense power. Before the next number of The Theatre is published, I hope to have seen the play, when I shall have something to say about it.

THREE DAYS.

A Love Song.

Three days of love, and only three,
Were ours to squander or forget.
The first we lived it by the sea,
With lips athirst, and eyelids wet:
Along the sand, across the foam,
We wandered forth one sunny morn:
Dear Heart! can you forget the home
Where once our happy love was born?

We floated next adown the stream,
And there we kissed—have you forgot?
'Twas then we first began to dream,
And keep the blue forget-me-not.
The river whispered to the rhyme
I made that summer day for you:
Dear Heart! can you forget the time
When first our love to passion grew?

'Twas music next that came one day,
Our love and deathless time between.
We sat and heard the organ play
In church—forgetting what had been.
Then we were silent, you and I,
The past by melody forgiven:
Sweet Heart! our love it did not die,
But went on angels' wings to Heaven!

December, 1882. C. S.

The second performance of the season was given by "The Roscius" Dramatic Club, on Tuesday evening, December 12, the programme consisting of J. Maddison Morton's farce, "Aunt Charlotte's Maid," and Buckstone's comedy, "Married Life." In the farce, many of the situations in which bear a strong family resemblance to those in "Betsy," Mr. Percy F. Marshall impersonated Horatio Thomas Sparkins with abundant fun and spirit, and as he was admirably played-up-to by Miss Rosina Stanley as Matilda Jones (by-the-way, is not an extra-voluminous crinolette or *tournure* rather out of place on a domestic?) the little piece went very brightly, and elicited continuous shouts of laughter from a large audience: and as laughter is the principal end and aim of pieces of this class, the rendering was a distinct success. Mr. Henry S. Ram was very funny as Major Volley, and made a good deal out of a comparatively small part. Pivot (a lawyer), Fanny Volley, and Mrs. Puddifoot were respectively represented by Mr. L. Bertram (who looked singularly and unnecessarily lugubrious), Miss Kate Graves and Miss Nelly Wilmott. In "Married Life" the honours were pretty equally divided between Miss Kate Erlam as Mrs. Lynx and Mr. John Denby as Coddle. The former gave a graceful and sympathetic impersonation decidedly above the average amateur standard, and the latter was irresistibly droll in his combined fears of draughts and a prosecution for bigamy. Mr. S. E. Forster was satisfactory as Lionel Lynx, but seemed unable to divest himself of a peculiar pump-handle-like movement of the arms which he would do well to avoid. The rest of the parts were distributed among Miss Lottie Roberts, Miss Laura Graves, Mrs. C. Bayley, Miss Nelly Wilmott, and Messrs. Arthur Snow, E. Gordon-Taylor, and Conyers Norton. The company generally were in more or less need of the services of the prompter, but the last-named gentleman, for whom an apology was considered necessary, was frequently hopelessly at sea and supplied the shortcomings of his memory by "gag" which was not always conspicuous for its refinement or good taste. As an inevitable consequence the piece dragged here and there, and revealed throughout a want of careful rehearsal which is the greater pity as the club has shown itself capable of more careful work. The musical arrangements deserve high praise. Miss Rose Dorell again presided at the pianoforte, which was on this occasion reinforced by a violin (Mr. S. E. Still), and cornet (Colonel Williams), the two playing a good and varied selection of music with taste and effect. The next performance is announced to take place on January 23.

At intervals during the past six weeks a "wonderful boy" has been giving recitals, mainly from Shakespeare, at the New Room, St. James's Hall. The young gentleman, John Colbourne Trinder, who is but fourteen years old, is gifted with an extraordinary memory, he renders the whole of "Hamlet," "Othello," and "The Lady of Lyons," without book or prompting, and with marked intelligence, combined with evidences of careful elocutionary teaching under a competent master. Mr. Edwin Drew conducted the management of the recitals.

Mr. Edwin Drew, who appears to be prospecting in elocutionary fields with good results, introduced another aspirant for laurels in Mr. Harding Thomas, who made his first appearance at St. James's Hall on Saturday afternoon, December 9. Although the programme, which consisted of "The Bells," "The Uncle," "Love and Oysters," &c. &c., was, by reason of its familiar items, calculated to challenge comparisons, Mr. Thomas pleased his audience and won recognition for his intelligent appreciation of both comedy and tragedy, his able elocution, and his command of facial expression. Mr. Thomas, I am told, recently gained the first prize for elocution at that prolific school of cleverness, the Birkbeck Institution.

A performance highly successful, dramatically speaking, but, owing to the inclement weather, limitedly so in the attendance drawn, was given under the direction of Mr. Arthur Wood, on Thursday, December 17, at the New Cross Public Hall. "Cut off with a Shilling," was pleasantly rattled through by Mr. Knight as Sam, Mr. Gerardot as the Colonel, and Miss Claremont, who played with marked intelligence and spirit, as Mrs. Gaythorne. "The Snowball" followed, and was received with continued laughter and applause to the fall of the curtain. As Mr. and Mrs. Featherstone, Mr. W.H. Vernon and Miss Swanborough were seen to the best advantage, their performances being admirable. Mr. Arthur Wood played Uncle John with dry and most effective humour. Mr. Knight was a capable Harry Prendergast. Mrs. A. Wood played Penelope, and made every point in that highly amusing character, and Miss Claremont looked Ethel, and acted what little she had to do in the part, to perfection.

Amongst the novelties, excitements and new plays that are springing up around us we most not forget that London is just now being enlivened by the brightest, most droll and popular of comedians. Mr. John S. Clarke is at the Strand Theatre making the public roar with laughter in the "Heir at Law." No words of mine are needed to emphasize the merit of his Dr. Pangloss the concentrated essence of drollery. By the time that these lines are in print Mr. John S. Clarke will have appeared in an old play by Tom Taylor re-named "Eloped; or, Babes and Beetles." This will be the Christmas dish at the Strand.

And another roar of laughter comes from the other side of the way, for Mr. Edward Terry has come home again to the Gaiety after the most successful tour in the country he has ever had. The Gaiety brigade received their favourite with all honours, and now the "merry family" is complete once more, and what a merry family it is: burlesque as good as in the old days of long ago, when constant companionship of clever people seems to start humour into life. No one who understands how to enjoy Christmas will pass by the Gaiety where Mr. Terry, Miss Farren and Miss Kate Vaughan are laughing and chaffing together. It is a cure for the most aggravated form of dyspepsia.

That quaint, old-fashioned house at Richmond—Her Majesty's Theatre—has been the birth-place of a large number of new pieces of more or less merit. On Monday last, December 11, there was produced a new and original domestic drama in three acts entitled "For Love's Sake," written by Mr. L. E. B. Stephens, his maiden effort in this direction, as he has only hitherto attempted farces, one of which, "Perichon," proved somewhat successful. The piece now noticed was produced under the direction of the author, who took a part, and Mr. J. Russell, the lessee of the theatre, the latter gentleman undertaking the character of Philip Hallworth, a dissipated woodman, in which he worked hard and effectively. Mr. Edward Neville, as James Ashwood, a gamekeeper, with the assistance of a very fine voice, made the most of his part; Mr. Stephens, as Samuel Tremlett, a lawyer, did the little he had to do well, and Mr. A. Hickox made a praiseworthy effort to be funny as Michael Marsden, a bailiff. Miss Lottie Russell, Marsden's sweetheart; Miss Ada Vincent, Hallworth's wife; and Miss Rosie Swain did what they could with their parts, but, unfortunately for them, there was very little scope for the ladies. The piece, which has the no small merit of being short, contains in the plot and dialogue some original ideas, and, with a little judicious alteration, may prove successful.

Edinburgh has always been a celebrated theatrical city, and a well-known test-place for good acting. The ambitious artist has ever had to dread the censure and to value the praise of modern Athens. But playgoers of Edinburgh, and visitors as well, will regret to hear that the Theatre Royal passes out of the hands of Mr. J. B. Howard—one so well known and so appreciated in London. Mr. Howard offered a rent of £2,000, and this was accompanied by a letter from Mr. Henry Irving, offering £1,000 a year security during the currency of Mr. Howard's lease; but the choice of the shareholders fell on Messrs. Logan and Hislop. Mr. Hislop has been for some time past manager of the Gaiety Theatre, Glasgow.

When Rachel, already admitted to the Conservatoire, went to ask Provost to give her special lessons in declamation, the teacher replied: "Go into the streets and sell bouquets, my child." It need hardly be said that the future tragédienne retired with a heavy heart. One evening, after she had played Hermione, in which she had been applauded with enthusiasm and recalled with frenzy, she filled her Greek tunic with flowers thrown to her upon the stage, and then kneeling before him who had advised her to earn her living by selling bouquets, she said, with graceful coquetry: "I have followed your advice, M. Provost; I sell bouquets. Will you buy any of me?"

"The Silver King" at the Princess's Theatre is such a success that it will, in all probability, keep its place in the bills for months yet to come. But a theatrical manager needs must look well forward in these days of rapid advance, and so Mr. Wilson Barrett has in hand a new play by Mr. Herman Merivale and Mr. Hawley Smart, which is to be his next venture.

During the past few weeks, that well-known and much-appreciated American humourist and entertainer, Mr. Frank Lincoln, has been amusing and instructing large audiences at the Egyptian Hall with his peculiarly witty discourses. He has been lately assisted by Miss G. H. Gleason, Miss Amy Sargent and Mr. Arthur Fagge, and also by the so-called "greatest living violinist in the world," Paganini Redivivus, whose beautiful solos have been exceedingly well received.

Everyone will be delighted to hear of the distinguished and emphatic success of Charles Wyndham in America. He opened with his company in "Fourteen Days," and this has been followed up by "Brighton," and all New York is crowding to see as good an actor in his line as England can turn out. There is but one opinion about Charles Wyndham in the innumerable notices I have read. He is considered there what we have for years considered him—a first-rate comedian. Next to Mr. Wyndham, the popular favourites of the company appear to be Mr. William Blakeley, with his curious, suave, and comical manner; and both Miss Rose Saker and Miss Florence Chalgrove, the pretty Irish girl who played in "Taken from Life" at the Adelphi. She is described as "a sparkling beauty of a distinctly Irish type, whose splendour of health and cheerfulness, combined with exact professional discretion as to the harmony of the picture, made her presence delightful." But one dramatic critic is extremely ungallant to the ladies. He says: "There is only one thing in the performance that could be advantageously cut, and that is the stay-laces. English women are far too fond of the corset."

Manager Dormeine père gave a parting dinner to his company, and towards the end of the dessert Brasseur said to Lhéritier: "I'll lay you a wager that I'll disguise myself so completely that nobody here shall be able to recognize me—not even you;" on which he slipped out of the room. Five minutes later coffee was served. The waiter who poured it out—a big young fellow, with black whiskers, thick eyebrows, crispy curling hair, and the bronzed complexion of a Southerner—flurried no doubt by the quality of the assembled guests, committed clumsiness on clumsiness, upsetting a liqueur-glass here, a cup there, and finished by sending a great splash of scalding Mocca on to the shirt-front of the amphitryon. A storm of reprobation was raised. "Donkey! Imbecile! Crétin!" "Can't you mind what you are about?" "Blunderhead! Brute! Oyster!" The unfortunate waiter excused himself as well as he could, with a strong Marseillais accent. The incident was forgotten, and conversation resumed. But after a few minutes, as if not knowing what he was doing, the offender took up a lump of sugar between his finger and thumb, and dipped it in Lhéritier's cup of coffee. The latter sprang to his feet enraged, seized the insolent waiter by the collar, and pushed him towards the door. But, with the turn of a hand, the other whipped off his wig and whiskers, and cried: "Sold old comrade! Admit that you have lost the wager!"

Bis dat qui cito dat. No one should sit down to a Christmas dinner without sending a trifle to the fund for the distressed employés deprived of work on account of the disastrous fire at the Alhambra Theatre. Now here is a practical suggestion. Suppose everyone who goes to the play were to send only one shilling, what a tremendous fund would be amassed. Every playgoer can surely spare a shilling?

On Monday, December 4, the annual competition for the Elocutionary Championship of Portsmouth was held in the Lecture Hall. The judges were five in number, and, as the result, Mr. J. Robertson was for the fourth time declared the winner of the Gold Medal. His recitation, which met with much favour, was a poem published in the August number of *The Theatre*, called "Coming Home," by Alfred Berlyn.

Théodore Barrière was once present at the first representation of a new five-act comedy, which proved a frightful failure, meeting without the smallest mark of approval. After the fourth act Barrière left the theatre, and under the portico he met one of his friends. "Are you going away?" the latter asked. "Yes." "Why?" "My dear fellow," replied Barrière, "I never go all the way to a funeral."

As announced last month, Captain Evatt Acklom continued his series of afternoon readings and recitations at the Steinway Hall on the 22nd and 29th November. On the former date selections were given from J. S. Le Fanu, Tennyson, and Wilkie Collins, and on the 29th from Dickens, Shakespeare, Sheridan, and Macklin's "Man of the World." The Captain was ably assisted in his very successful entertainment by Miss Agnes Thorndike and Mdlle. Adele Faux.

The tenth performance of the Nelson Amateur Dramatic Club was given on the 18th November, in aid of the funds of the Linen and Woollen Drapers Association, at the St. George's Hall. "Twenty minutes under an Umbrella" and "Two Roses" were given successfully. In the comedietta Mr. R. J. Thomas played Frank with finish and ease, and Miss Emma Ritta was a charming Kate. Mr. Albery's comedy is so effective that it requires but moderate representation to ensure its success; in this instance, however, its treatment by the Nelson Club left little to be desired from the non-professional point of view. Mr. R. J. Thomas was a frank and manly Jack Wyatt, Mr. Geo. H. Cook a well-elaborated Digby Grant, Mr. T. H. Turner a quietly pathetic Caleb Deecie. The humour of "Our Mr. Jenkins" was fully elicited by Mr. George Oliver, and the same approval was deserved by Mr. J. H. Walker in the part of Furnival the Solicitor. Miss Emma Ritta made a bright and winning Lottie, Miss Ellen Molyneux a capital foil as Ida, Miss Bessie Walters a very good Mrs. Jenkins, and Miss Reynolds all that could be desired as Mrs. Cupps.

This song will be sung by Miss Fannie Leslie in the Christmas pantomime at the Grand Theatre, at Leeds:—

RUN UP THE FLAG!

A Patriotic Song.

RUN up the Flag! my sailor lads, above the gallant mast!
Deck out your British ironclads! and hold the anchor fast!
The war is over! here's three cheers for men who fought so well!
But mingle them with honest tears for such as fought—but fell!
Once more upon the deck you stood, and cleared it for the fight:
Not Nelson, no, nor Collingwood, ere saw a braver sight.
No matter whose the glory, no matter whose the fame,
You'll raise your hats, my British tars, at Beauchamp Seymour's name;
You're praised by English beauty—and Englishmen will tell
You went to do your duty; and, my lads, you did it well!
So three cheers for the Navy,
Let your valour never lag;
And one cheer more for England—
Run up! Run up! the Flag!

Run up the Flag! my soldier boys, above the barrack square,
For victory has fallen to those who "do and dare."
For now the war is over, and you've left the desert land,
We'll let you live in clover and can shake you by the hand;
You shall tell, when you have rested, of the enemy at bay,
When you charged the foe at midnight, and you won at break of day;
The cavalry did bravely, boys, by Lowe and Russell led,
But the army that took Egypt had Sir Garnet at its head;
Let them sneer, my gallant fellows, let them try your fame to crush,
You went to win for England, and you did it with a rush!
So three cheers for the Army,
Let your valour never lag;
And one cheer more for England—
Run up! Run up! the Flag!

Run up the Flag! old England, above your wooden walls,
For you've brave sons to answer when the voice of duty calls;
No matter where they wander, no matter where they roam,
The fame they still remember of their little island home.
Go search the world wide over who something find amiss,
You never will discover a land more free than this!
So down with agitation that pulls the country down,
The stalwart British nation stands on People and the Crown!
On Freedom and the People, the country stands or falls,
And they will keep their Army! and will guard our wooden walls!
So three cheers for old England,
Let her valour never lag;
And one cheer more for Queen and Prince—
Run up! Run up! the Flag!

C. S.

New Plays

PRODUCED IN LONDON AND THE PROVINCES

From Nov. 1881 *to Dec.* 1882.

DECEMBER, 1881.

5th.—"Under the Mistletoe," Comedy-Drama in a Prologue and Five Tableaux, by Molyneux St. John and R. Mounteney Jephson. *Imperial* (Afternoon).

15th.—"Foggerty's Fairy," Fairy Comedy in Three Acts, by W. S. Gilbert. *Criterion.*

24th.—"Aladdin," Burlesque-Drama in Three Acts, by Robert Reece. *Gaiety.*

26th.—"Macfarlane's Will," Pantomime Vaudeville in Three Acts, by Joseph Mackay and Henri August. *Imperial* (Afternoon).

26th.—"The Fisherman's Daughter," Comedy-Drama in Two Acts, by Charles Garvice. *Royalty.*

26th.—"Pluto; or, Little Orpheus and His Lute," Burlesque, by Henry J. Byron. *Royalty.*

29th.—"The Squire," Play in Three Acts, by A. W. Pinero. *St. James's.*

31st.—"Taken from Life," Drama in Five Acts, by Henry Pettitt. *Adelphi.*

JANUARY, 1882.

2nd.—"The Rustic Maiden," Drama in Two Acts, by G. L. Gordon. *Olympic.*

14th.—"The Cynic," Comedy in Four Acts, by Herman Merivale. *Globe.*

26th.—"A Bed of Roses," Comedietta in One Act, by Henry A. Jones. *Globe.*

28th.—"London Pride," Drama in Four Acts, by G. L. Gordon and Joseph Mackay. *Philharmonic.*

FEBRUARY.

2nd.—"The Marble Arch," Comedietta in One Act, by Edward Rose and Miss Agnes J. Garroway. *Prince of Wales's* (First produced at the *Prince of Wales's, Liverpool*, December 12th, 1881.)

4th.—"On an Island," Comedietta in One Act, by J. Wilton Jones. *Vaudeville.* (First produced at the *Theatre Royal, Bradford*, March 8th, 1879.)

11th.—"Manola," Comic Opera in Three Acts, adapted from the French by H. B. Farnie; music by Charles Lecocq. *Strand.*

13th.—"Love's Revenge," Sensational Drama in Three Acts, by W. E. Morton. *Theatre Royal, Portsmouth.*

15th.—"My Little Girl," Comedietta in One Act, adapted from W. Besant and Rice's novel of the same name, by Dion G. Boucicault. *Court.*

15th.—"The Manager," Farcical Play in Three Acts, founded on "Le Mari de la Débutante," by F. C. Burnand. *Court.*

16th.—"Destiny," Play in Three Acts, by W. F. Lyon. *Globe* (Afternoon). (First produced at *Her Majesty's, Richmond*, November 14th, 1881.)

18th.—"A Storm in a Tea-Cup," Operetta in One Act, by Mrs. F. Corder, music by F. Corder. *Brighton Aquarium* (Afternoon). (See March 22nd.)

20th.—"Jack the Giant Killer," Burlesque, by J. Tully. *Theatre Royal, North Shields.*

23rd.—"Now-a-Days," Comedy in Three Acts, by Walter S. Craven. *Theatre Royal, Croydon.*

27th.—"Far From the Madding Crowd," Pastoral Drama in Three Acts, by Thomas Hardy and J. Comyns Carr. *Prince of Wales's, Liverpool.* (*See* April 29th.)

27th.—"Two Wedding Rings," Domestic Drama in Five Acts, by G. Somers Bellamy and Fred. Romer. *Britannia.*

27th.—"Cast Adrift," Drama in Four Acts, by R. Palgrave. *New Theatre Royal, Bristol.* (*See* April 10th.)

27th.—"Heiress Hunting," Comedy in Three Acts, by Edward Bucknall. *Her Majesty's, Richmond.*

March.

4th.—"Fourteen Days," Farcical Comedy in Three Acts, adapted from "Un Voyage d'Agrément" of Gondinet and Bisson, by Henry J. Byron. *Criterion.*

4th.—"The Crocodile; or, Accused of Murder," Comedy-Drama in Three Acts, by W. Lowe. *Theatre Royal, Cardiff.*

6th.—"Oh! Those Girls," Musical Comedy in One Act, adapted from the German, by Robert Soutar; music by W. Meyer Lütz. *Gaiety.*

6th.—"Medusa," Comedietta in One Act, by Fred. W. Hays. *St. James's.*

11th.—"Dark Deeds," Drama in Four Acts, by May Holt (Mrs. R. Fairburn). Adapted from Miss Braddon's novel, "The Trail of the Serpent." *Philharmonic.*

13th.—"Auntie," Farcical Play in Three Acts, by Henry J. Byron. *Toole's.*

16th.—"The Queen of Diamonds," Comedy-Drama in Three Acts, by Miss Annie Brunton. *Princess's, Edinburgh.*

18th.—"Vulcan; or, the (H)ammerous Blacksmith," Burlesque in Four Scenes, by Edward Rose and Augustus Harris. *Opera Comique.*

18th.—"Madcap Violet," Comedy-Drama, in Four Acts, adapted by Miss Ella Strathmore from Wm. Black's Novel of the same name. *Sadler's Wells.*

20th.—"Broken Links," Comedy-Drama in Four Acts, by Henry Holmes. *Her Majesty's, Richmond.*

22nd.—"A Storm in a Tea Cup," produced for the first time in London at the *Gaiety* (Afternoon). (See February 18th.)

25th.—"Moths," Play in Four Acts, by H. Hamilton, taken from Ouida's novel of the same name. *Globe.*

25th.—"Kevin's Choice," Operetta in Two Acts, composed by T. A. Wallworth. *Adelphi* (Afternoon).

25th.—"Out at Elbows," Comedietta in One Act, by Aylmer H. Dove. *Toole's* (Afternoon).

27th.—"Humanity; or, A Passage in the Life of Grace Darling," a Sensational Drama in Four Acts, by Hugh Marston and Leonard Raie. *Theatre Royal, Leicester.* (*See* April 10th.)

APRIL.

3rd.—"The Trump Card," Drama in Five Acts, by F. W. Broughton and J. Wilton Jones. *Grand, Leeds.*

6th.—"A Link o' Gold," Drama in Three Acts, by George Capel. *Alexandra, Sheffield.*

8th.—"Lucy Brandon," Romantic Drama in Five Acts, by Robert Buchanan. *Imperial* (Afternoon).

8th.—"The Shadow of the Sword," Romantic Drama in Five Acts, by Robert Buchanan. *Olympic.* (First produced at the *Theatre Royal, Brighton*, May 9th, 1881.)

8th.—"The Parvenu," Comedy in Three Acts, by G. W. Godfrey. *Court.*

8th.—"Cast Adrift," produced for the first time in London at *Sadler's Wells.* (*See* February 27th.)

8th.—"Night Birds," Drama in Four Acts, by Joseph Mackay and G. L. Gordon. *Philharmonic.*

10th.—"Not Registered," Domestic Drama in Two Acts, by Arthur Matthison. *Royalty.*

10th.—"Sindbad," Burlesque in Five Scenes, by Frank W. Green. *Royalty.*

10th.—"Humanity," produced for the first time in London at the *Standard.* (*See* March 27th.)

10th.—"Ye Ladye of Lyons," Burlesque by Afred Lewis-Clifton. *Aquarium Theatre, Yarmouth.*

15th.—"The Kingmaker," Historical Drama in Four Acts, by J. W. Boulding. *Adelphi* (Afternoon).

15th.—"A Shadow Sceptre," Historical Drama in Four Acts, by H. Hamilton. *Prince's, Manchester.*

17th.—"The First Breeze," Comedietta in One Act, by George Somers Bellamy and Frank Romer. *Theatre Royal, Brighton.*

17th.—"The Chiltern Hundreds," Comedy-Opera in One Act, written by T. Edgar Pemberton, composed by T. Anderton. *Alexandra, Liverpool.*

17th.—"Branded for Life; or, the Rightful Heir," Drama in Four Acts by Hal Collier. *Theatre Royal, Blyth.*

17th.—"A Little Physical Muddle; or, Paul Puzzle Thatch's Holiday," Operetta, by Hugh Moss, music by Beckett Carlton. *Public Hall, Reigate.*

21st.—"Won by Honours," Comedy-Drama in Four Acts, by Miss Annie Brunton. *Theatre Royal, Brighton.* (*See* July 12th.)

22nd.—"Long Ago," Drama in One Act, by Arthur A'Beckett. *Royalty* (Afternoon).

22nd.—"Boccaccio," Comic Opera in Three Acts, English version by Robert Reece and H. B. Farnie; music by Franz von Suppé. *Comedy*.

25th.—"Odette," Play in Four Acts, by Victorien Sardou. *Haymarket.*

25th.—"The Revolutionist," Drama in One Act, by Percy F. Montague. *Bideford Public Rooms.* (*See* June 29th.)

26th.—"Merry Mignon; or, The Beauty and the Beast," Operatic Extravaganza, by J. Wilton Jones. *Court, Liverpool.*

26th.—"A Simple Sweep," Musical Absurdetta in One Act, by F. W. Broughton and Rev. James F. Downes. *Princess's.* (First produced at the *Leeds Victoria Hall*, January 25th, 1882.)

28th.—"A Rift in the Cloud," Comedy-Drama in Two Acts, by George Romer. *Winter Gardens, Blackpool.*

29th.—"Lord Bateman; or, Picotee's Pledge," Comic Opera in Two Acts, by H. P. Stephens and Edward Solomon. *Gaiety* (Afternoon).

29th.—"Far from the Madding Crowd" produced for the first time in London at the *Globe.* (*See* February 27th.)

MAY.

1st.—"What's the Odds?" Comedy in Three Acts, by J. Wilton Jones. *Theatre Royal, Bolton.*

3rd.—"Love's Anguish," Play in Five Acts, adapted from "Serge Panine" of Georges Ohnet, by Oscar H. Schou. *Adelphi* (Afternoon).

3rd.—"The Wicklow Rose," Irish Comic Opera in Three Acts, by Robert Reece; music by G. B. Allen. *Prince's, Manchester.*

4th.—"Blindfold," Comedietta in One Act, adapted from the French by R. Soutar. *Gaiety* (Afternoon).

4th.—"Foiled," Comedy in Three Acts, by H. W. Williamson. *Theatre Royal, Portsmouth.*

6th.—"Reparation; or, A Loyal Love," Drama in Three Acts, by Arthur Shirley. *New Cross Public Hall.*

8th.—"Jack and Jill," Comedy-Drama in One Act. Translated from the French. *Britannia.*

15th.—"The Latchkey," Farce by Leopold Wagner. *Sadler's Wells.*

15th.—"Innocents Abroad; or, Going over to Rome," Operetta in One Act, by J. F. McArdle; music by W. Jude. *Bijou Opera House, Liverpool.*

16th.—"Reparation," Play in Five Acts, adapted from the German of Mosenthal. *Gaiety* (Afternoon).

19th.—"Above Suspicion," Drama in Three Acts, by G. Capel. *Theatre Royal, York.*

20th.—"First in the Field," Comedietta in One Act, adapted from "Suzanne" of Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy, by Charles Marsham Rae. Produced for the first time in London at the *Globe* (First produced at the *Theatre Royal, Nottingham*, May 9th 1881.)

22nd.—"Cupid in Camp," Comic Drama in Two Acts, adapted from the French, by G. S. Vernon. *Criterion.*

27th.—"After Darkness—Dawn," Domestic Drama in One Act, adapted from the French, by Aglen A. Dowty. *Toole's* (Afternoon).

27th.—"Wreck of the Pinafore," Comic Opera in Two Acts, by H. Lingard; music by Luscombe Searelle. *Opera Comique.*

27th.—"The Dark Deeds o' London," Drama, by Edward Towers. *Pavilion.*

29th.—"Very Suspicious; or, Murder Will Out," Comedietta in One Act. by Thos. H. Hardman, taken from the Belgian of M. Hendricks. *Theatre Royal, Leeds.*

JUNE.

1st.—"Single Heart and Double Face," Drama by Charles Reade. *Princess's, Edinburgh.*

3rd.—"Simpson and Delilah," Comedietta in One Act, by Sutherland Edwards. *Avenue.*

3rd.—"Manteaux Noirs," Comic Opera in Three Acts, adapted from the French of Scribe, by W. Parke and Harry Paulton; music by Bucalossi. *Avenue.*

5th.—"The Villainous Squire and the Village Rose," 'Bucolic Pastoral' in One Act, by Henry J. Byron; music by J. Fitzgerald. *Toole's.*

5th.—"Nobody's Fault," Comedietta in One Act, by Arthur Law; music by Hamilton Clarke. *St. George's Hall.*

5th.—"Major Baggs," Farcical Comedy in Three Acts, by Arthur Lloyd. *Philharmonic.*

10th.—"The Romany Rye," Drama in Five Acts, by George R. Sims. *Princess's.*

14th.—"Fibs," Farcical Play in Three Acts, by Welborn Tylar. *Toole's* (Afternoon).

16th.—"Conspiracy," Play in Four Acts, by G. L. Gordon. *Prince of Wales's, Liverpool.*

17th.—"The Double Rose," Historical Play in Five Acts, by J. W. Boulding. *Adelphi* (Afternoon).

19th.—"Perichon," Farce in One Act, by L. E. B. Stephens. *Her Majesty's, Richmond.*

19th.—"The Mulberry Bush," produced at *Brighton.* (*See* September 2nd.)

29th.—"The Revolutionist," first acted in London at *St. George's Hall.* (*See* April 25th.)

JULY.

7th.—"Light," Drama in Three Acts, by E. Romaine Callender. *Theatre Royal, Sheffield.*

12th.—"Won by Honours," produced for the first time in London at the *Comedy* (Afternoon). (*See* April 21st.)

12th.—"Luggage per Rail," Farce in One Act, by J. Russell. *Her Majesty's, Richmond.*

13th.—"A Bad Penny," Drama in One Act, by W. Lestocq. *Vaudeville* (Afternoon).

13th.—"Gammon," Comedy in Three Acts, adapted from "La Poudre aux Yeux" of Labiche and Martin, by James Mortimer. *Vaudeville* (Afternoon).

17th.—"Men and Women," Sensational Drama in Six Tableaux, by May Holt (Mrs. R. Fairburn). *Surrey.*

21st.—"The Zulu Chief," Farce by Wm. Lowe. *Theatre Royal, Paisley.*

22nd.—"The Vicar of Bray," Comic Opera in Two Acts, by Sydney Grundy and Edward Solomon. *Globe.*

24th.—"My Brave Little Wife," Comedy-Drama in One Act, by A. M. Seaton. *Toole's.*

24th.—"Merely Players," Drama in One Act, by Edward Rose. *Prince of Wales's.*

24th.—"Guilty; or Not Guilty," Sensational Drama in Three Acts, by Charles F. Hilder. *Grecian.*

24th.—"Fighting Fortune," Drama in Four Acts, by F. A. Scudamore, produced for the first time in London at the *Marylebone.* (First produced at *Theatre Royal, Bolton*, May 9th, 1881.)

24th.—"The Captain of the Guard," Comedy Opera in Two Acts, translated from the French, and music by George Fox, lyrics by Frederick Wood. *Theatre Royal, Margate.*

27th.—"Law, not Justice," Drama in Four Acts, by A. C. Calmour. *Surrey.*

28th.—"Artful Little Spouser," Farce in One Act, by Charles L. Carson and Maurice Comerford. *Alhambra, Barrow-in-Furness.*

28th.—"Mick M'Quaid," Comedy-Drama by Charles Eustace. *Theatre Royal, Wexford.*

31st.—"Unknown; a River Mystery," Drama in Five Acts, by John A. Stevens, produced for the first time in England at the *Surrey.*

31st.—"A Wise Child," Comedy in Three Acts, adapted from the French, by George R. Sims. *Prince of Wales's, Liverpool.*

AUGUST.

3rd.—"The Wages of Sin," Drama in Five Acts, by Frank Harvey. *Theatre Royal, Coventry.* (*See* August 21st.)

3rd.—"Never Say 'Dye,'" Farce by A. J. Levy. *New Theatre, Swansea,*

5th.—"Pluck," Sensational Domestic Drama in Seven Tableaux, by Henry Pettit and Augustus Harris. *Drury Lane.*

19th.—"Craft," Drama in a Prologue and Five Acts, by Arthur Sketchley. *Theatre Royal, Leicester.*

21st.—"The Wages of Sin," produced for the first time in London at the *Standard.* (*See* August 3rd.)

21st.—"Daniel O'Connell," Comedy-Drama in Four Acts, by James Robertson. *Queen's, Dublin.*

21st.—"Real Life," Drama in Five Acts. *Surrey.*

21st.—"A Prince of Egypt," Drama in Four Acts, by Charles Squier. *Her Majesty's, Richmond.*

28th.—"Fra Diavolo," Burlesque in Three Scenes, by J. T. Denny. *Philharmonic.*

SEPTEMBER.

2nd.—"Little Miss Muffet," Comedy in Three Acts, adapted from "La Femme à Papa" of A. Hennequin, by James Albery. *Criterion.* (First produced under the title of "The Mulberry Bush," at *Theatre Royal, Brighton,* June 19th.)

7th.—"Tristan," Drama in Four Acts, by Ben. H. Hilton. *Court, Liverpool.*

9th.—"Diane," Play in Five Acts, adapted from "Diane de Lys" of Alexandre Dumas the Younger, by James Mortimer. *Toole's.*

15th.—"Little Robin Hood," Burlesque-Drama in Three Acts, by Robert Reece. *Gaiety.*

16th.—"An Old Flame," Comedietta in One Act, adapted from "Le Passé de Nichette," by W. T. Blackmore. *Gaiety* (Afternoon).

16th.—"Black, but Comely," Drama in Three Acts, adapted from J. G. Whyte-Melville's novel of the same name, by Miss Stephanie Forrester. *Gaiety* (Afternoon.)

21st.—"Young Mrs. Winthrop," Play in Four Acts, by Bronson Howard. *Marylebone.* (Afternoon.)

28th.—"The Novel Reader," Comedy in Three Acts, adapted from "La Petite Marquise," of Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy, by Joseph Mackay and Sydney Grundy. *Globe* (Afternoon). (Private Performance.)

29th.—"Mr. Guffin's Elopement," Musical Farce in One Act, by Arthur Law and George Grossmith. *Alexandra, Liverpool.* (*See* October 7th.)

30th.—"Chandos," Drama in Five Acts, adapted from Ouida's novel of the same name, by Hartbury Brooklyn. *Adelphi* (Afternoon).

OCTOBER.

2nd.—"For Ever," Sensational Drama in Seven Acts, by Paul Merritt and George Conquest. *Surrey.*

2nd.—"Hope," Drama in Four Acts, by Arthur Law. *Standard.*

2nd.—"From Father to Son," Drama in Three Acts, by J. Palgrave Simpson, and Arthur A'Beckett. *Bijou Opera House, Liverpool.*

6th.—"Wrath; or, A Message from the Dead," Drama in Three Acts, adapted from Ouida's "Strathmore," by C. H. Stephenson. *Theatre Royal, Huddersfield.*

7th.—"Mr. Guffin's Elopment," produced for the first time in London at *Toole's.* (*See* September 29th.)

9th.—"On Condition," Operetta in One Act, by Robert Reece and W. Meyer Lütz. *Opéra Comique.*

9th.—"Recommended to Mercy," Drama in a Prologue and Four Acts, adapted from Miss Braddon's "Joshua Haggard," by J. Wilton Jones. *Theatre Royal, Dewsbury.*

10th.—"Suggs in Danger," Farce in One Act, by Thos. Atkinson, jun. *Sadler's Wells.*

10th.—"A First Experiment," Comedietta in One Act, by J. Wilton Jones. *Theatre Royal, Dewsbury.*

12th.—"A Lazy Life," Comedy in Three Acts, by Arthur Shirley. *New Cross Public Hall.*

14th.—"Rip Van Winkle," Comic Opera in Three Acts, by Henri Meilhac, Phillippe Gille, and H. B. Farnie; music by Robert Planquette. *Comedy.*

16th.—"Wedded Bliss," Comedietta in One Act, adapted from the French, by Harry Paulton. *Avenue.*

16th.—"The Merry War," Comic Opera in Three Acts, by F. Bell and Richard Genée; music by Johann Strauss, English version by R. Reece. *Alhambra.*

26th.—"Mordecai Lyons," Domestic Drama, by Edmund Harrington. *Her Majesty's, Richmond.*

28th.—"Jean; ou, la République," Drama in Four Acts, adapted from the French. *Sadler's Wells.*

31st.—"Girls and Boys," Comedy in Three Acts, by A. W. Pinero. *Toole's.*

NOVEMBER.

1st.—"More Than Ever," Burlesque in One Act, by Arthur Matthison. *Gaiety* (Afternoon).

6th.—"The Ruling Passion," Drama in a Prologue and Five Acts, by James Willing. *Standard.*

6th.—"Eunice; or, Love and Duty," Drama in Four Acts, by E. Towers. *Pavilion.*

11th.—"Taking it Easy," Farce in One Act. *Toole's* (Afternoon).

11th.—"The Promise of May," Rustic Drama in Three Acts, by Alfred Tennyson. *Globe.*

14th.—"Picking up the Pieces," Comedietta in One Act, by Julian Sturgis. *Court.*

16th.—"The Silver King," Drama in Five Acts, by Henry A. Jones and Henry Herman. *Princess's.*

18th.—"Love and Money," Drama in Five Acts, by Charles Reade and Henry Pettitt. *Adelphi.*

18th.—"Frolique," Burlesque in Three Scenes, adapted from the French, by Henry J. Byron and H. B. Farnie. *Strand.*

18th.—"Pity," Drama in One Act, by Arthur Shirley. *New Cross Public Hall.*

23rd.—"Dad," Comedy, by F. A. Scudamore. *Theatre Royal, Belfast.*

25th.—"Iolanthe; or, The Peer and the Peri," Comic Opera in Two Acts, by W. S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan. *Savoy.*

THE THEATRE.

February, 1883.

Richard Wagner as a Stage Manager.

By F. Corder.

I HAD it in my mind, a year or so ago, to write a very different kind of paper under the above heading. Close study of Wagner's dramatic works had convinced me that his stage effects, striking and original as they were, were unpractical and idealistic. The unnecessary complexity of his stage directions, and the cumbrous phraseology in which they were couched, struck me as amateurish, while his introduction of live animals on the stage in the "Nibelung Ring" seemed conclusive evidence of his lack of judgment.

My opinions were simply knocked on the head and completely reversed in the space of six hours, on the memorable 30th of July last; in other words, the performance of "Parsifal" made me feel ashamed of myself. In that extraordinary work Wagner has surpassed himself in the matter of stage effect, and I think I shall be doing a service to the English theatrical world in describing his ingenious devices from a professional point of view.

First, there is that wounded swan. He flies across the stage with flapping wings and bent neck, in a really life-like manner. The knights bring on his dead body, limp and powerless, and he inspires interest instead of ridicule. A good skin admirably stuffed, supported by judiciously placed wires, that is all—but in what other opera house would you see it? Remember the "Lohengrin" swan that we have to endure in London, and think, without a shudder if you can, of his crooked, wobbly neck!

Passing over the admirable dramatic effect of the hero's first entrance, suddenly tearing us from a solemn and impressive scene

to the angry cries of a crowd of knights who vow vengeance on the innocent slayer of the swan, let us consider that marvellous change of scene which illustrates Parsifal and Gurnemant taking their way to the castle of the Grail.

The scene represents a forest glade, a lake showing through the trees at back. There are three sets of tree wings, or rather "cuts," for they join on to the borders and have rocky ground-pieces across the stage. The libretto gives the following directions :—

"Gradually, while Parsifal and Gurnemant appear to walk, the scene changes from L. to R. The forest disappears ; a cave opens in rocky cliffs and conceals the two ; they are then seen again in sloping passages, which they appear to ascend. Long-sustained trombone notes softly swell ; approaching peals of bells are heard. At last they arrive at a mighty hall, which loses itself overhead in a high vaulted dome, down from which alone the light streams in."

Technically this is what happens: the whole of the elaborate "set" forest moves across the stage, forming a *quadruple* panorama, the realistic effect being much heightened by the front portions moving much quicker than the back. The tree "cuts" are succeeded by rocks, in which are seen, first natural caves, and then artificial passages partly lined with masonry. The front panorama then shuts in the stage with a front cloth representing a stone wall, close to the proscenium. After remaining stationary for *thirty seconds* only, instead of being drawn off, it sinks, and reveals the magnificent set scene of the cathedral hall—a built dome with built cloisters all round. There is even a cloth laid over the whole stage, representing marble pavement. The whole of this elaborate change is accomplished with perfect smoothness, not a creak or sound of any sort betraying the means. The extent of the panorama, too, is very considerable, and the whole change takes a good ten minutes. On the second night a nail in the flies caught the front concealing canvas, and ripped it off the batten as it advanced. But even this betrayed no secrets. Through the gap I saw the cathedral scene *already set*, and before half the audience noticed anything amiss, the curtains gently closed for a moment (Wagner has abolished the ugly roll-up system), and the rest of the change was omitted.

During the course of this scene I was much struck by the graceful positions of the two young ladies (names unknown) who did the pages, and also by the absolute precision of all the groups

and tableaux, which never varied in the different performances. I was told of an adventurous American reporter who risked unknown dangers, and secretly made his way into the "Fürsten galerie" one morning at rehearsal. There he saw Wagner with a lump of chalk in his hand marking out on the stage (this scene being set) the positions of each table, bench, and group of knights. After this I doubted the great man's practicality no more. In fact, throughout, I have never seen stage business more perfectly rehearsed and performed, even by the Meiningers or at our own Lyceum.

Now for the next impossible effect. The wounded king, Amfortas, takes an antique crystal cup (the "Grail") from the shrine, which the youths set down on a table before him, and all bend in prayer before it, while the stage gradually darkens. Stage direction :—

"A blinding ray of light shoots down from above upon the cup, which glows with increasing crimson lustre. Amfortas, with brightened mien, raises the "Grail" aloft, and waves it gently about on all sides."

How would you manage this little piece of business, friend stage-manager? It puzzled me for a long while. First I thought there must be a lamp in the cup, but an opera glass showed that this was not the case. After the ray of limelight shot down on the central group the cup glowed and glowed, brighter and brighter, till one could hardly look at it. This is how it was done. On taking the cup from its shrine the pages attach to it two fine wires which issue from the table. The cup, opalescent outside, is crimson within, and contains—an incandescent electric lamp! The gasman, or somebody at the prompt, turns on the current gradually, and there you are.

In the second act there are several admirable points. The change of scene from the sorcerer's donjon keep to his magic flower-garden is not only a clever mechanical change, but the contrast between the gloomy walls and the almost extravagantly gorgeous garden is a very happy effect. The whole stage is covered with flowering shrubs of gigantic dimensions; they climb up and shut out all view of the sky; a partial glimpse of a Moorish palace at one side and an opening leading to the garden wall at the extreme back of the exceedingly deep stage afford the only relief to the eye from the wild tangle of sprays, leaves, and

roses as big as an umbrella. This gaudy mass of glaring colour has been objected to by many, but its very exaggeration is done with deliberate intent, as we shall see presently. At the end of the act, Parsifal, having resisted all evil temptation, the magician issues from the palace (R. 2nd E.) with the sacred spear which he has purloined in his hand, threatening to destroy the young man with the weapon he has come to seek. The book says :—

"He flings the spear at Parsifal ; it remains floating over his head. Parsifal grasps it with his hand, and brandishes it with a gesture of exalted rapture, making the sign of the Cross with it."

This very ticklish business is managed in the following ingenious manner : a fine wire runs across the stage about seven feet from the ground. One end is fixed to the prompt wing, where Parsifal stands, the other is held loose behind Klingsor by a carpenter. The spear is slung on this wire by a couple of little rings attached to it by thin threads. When Klingsor raises the spear, the carpenter fixes that end of the wire taut, the spear whizzes along to the end ; Parsifal catches it, plucks it off—the threads easily snapping—and there you are again !

Now the act concludes with a masterly piece of effect. Parsifal makes the sign of the Cross and curses the magician. Instantly, almost before you can wink your eye, there is a clap of thunder (noble thunder it is too !), the various pieces of the elaborate "set" fly up, down, off, with perfect simultaneousness, the palace at the side crumbles to ruins, a rain of faded flowers descends for a moment from the flies, and before you can realize what has happened the stage is almost bare. One or two withered and broken palms alone remain, there are bleak and dismal snow-capped mountains in the extreme distance—all the rest is a howling wilderness of sand and rocks. Apart from the admirable way in which the carpenters do their work, I know of no trick change—and I have seen many—which is at all to be compared to this for effect. After having one's eyes really pained for three-quarters of an hour by the glare of colour in the garden, the dull misery of that barren waste is a thing neither to be forgotten nor described, so impressive is it. Whoever carried it out, our profoundest respect is due to the master-mind which conceived this gigantic effect. It simply staggers the audience, and the applause —forbidden at all other times—is here not to be restrained.

The third act presents fewer points for notice. A well-painted spring landscape is the first scene, and this was originally intended

to change by a panorama to the "Grail" castle, as in the first act. The panorama was painted and tried, but Wagner considered the effect to be spoiled by repetition—in which he was doubtless quite right. The curtain closes for a few minutes during the change—here, as elsewhere, performed without the least noise. One little point in the action of the second scene of this act is worthy of remark. The king, unable to bear the torture of his wound any longer, implores his knights to slay him. He tears open his robe, and, rising from the sofa which he has never yet quitted, staggers to the front. The whole of the crowd of knights make a simultaneous rush after him, and this, the only movement of the characters that has taken place for some time, has an electric effect. One feels quite a creepy thrill, and this is the moment of all others for the climax. Parsifal steps forward, touches the king with the sacred spear, heals him, and usurps his office. He takes out and displays the Grail with the same effect as in the first act. An exquisitely grouped tableau is formed, and in the flood of light pouring from the cup a white dove is seen to descend and hover over Parsifal's head. I noticed with satisfaction the ingenious arrangement of wires by which this bird was made to descend with perfect steadiness and remain motionless to the end. At Covent Garden we should have had our old friend the "Der Frieschütz" pigeon, with his wings made on the principle of a child's feather windmill.

Now in all the effects, great and small, here detailed, I contend that the ingenuity of Wagner himself has alone made the impossible possible, and the hazardous certain. Don't we all know how the swan, spear and dove effects would ruin the whole performance at an ordinary opera house? At a theatre where a piece runs for some hundreds of nights, very ticklish feats of stage-management may be accomplished, though never with absolute certainty in England, where the sobriety of stage-carpenters is not to be relied on; but at the opera, where the piece is changed every night—heaven knows why!—Wagner's music-dramas, even "Lohengrin," are simply impossible. It is a pity that a man should make things so hard for all concerned, and make a decent performance of his works a rarity, but Wagner has conclusively shown in "Parsifal" that none of his effects are *per se* impossible and therefore one blessing is likely to result—namely, the gradual improvement in matters of stage management at opera houses. And I am sure there is plenty of room for it.

A Ladies' Debate on Henry Irving.

FEW persons will be found bold enough to dispute the fact that the fair sex possesses in large measure the talent known as the "gift of the gab"—whether that gift be often associated with skill in argument or power of keeping to the point is a question on which opinion will probably be less unanimous.

"Arguments out of a pretty mouth," says Addison, in "The Frecholder," "are unanswerable;" but the playful humour which underlies his remark, and which testifies his real opinion as to the quality of such arguments, would be obvious enough even had he not, later in the same publication, drawn up, for lady disputants among Whigs and Tories, a cartel, of which the second paragraph ran as follows:—"That if, in the course of the engagement, either of the combatants, finding herself hard pressed by her adversary, should proceed to personal reflections or discovery of secrets, they shall be parted by the standers-by." The so-called Augustan Age has given place to the Victorian, and ladies to whom Addison paid his merry compliments are succeeded by individuals for whom "higher education" has done its best and its worst. We have now our students of Girton and of Nuneham, and our "sweet girl graduates" of the University of London. At the close of the Session 1881-2 a lady-student carried off, over the heads of the men, a prize for *Logic* at University College, London, and Addison's pleasantly-veiled sarcasms were avenged! A "Women's Debating Society" has for some time existed, under the presidency of Mrs. Fawcett, at University College. Several of its members rejoice in the strange-sounding, jest-provoking title of "*Bachelor* of Arts." Ready wits and ready tongues arm combatants for the arena of discussion; the shield of good temper completes the equipment; and there has not, as yet, appeared any need for the enforcement of the excellent advice delivered to female Hanoverians and Jacobites in fiery days gone by.

The 13th of last December was appointed by the Committee of the Women's Debating Society as "Visitors' Day," for the first term of the College Session. It was our privilege on that occasion to attend the deliberations of the august body, and, as the subject

under discussion was connected with the drama, it strikes us that a very brief report of the proceedings of the evening would not be out of place in this periodical.

Five o'clock was the hour fixed for the opening of the debate in the "Women's Common Room" of the College. Flaring gas and a roaring fire did their ineffectual best to counteract the influence of the fog which reigned despotically without, and which made a spirited attempt to usurp sovereignty within. A goodly number of girls and women had assembled in the dull, spacious room devoted to the use of female students. Members of the Society seated themselves on either side of a long table; would-be auditors of the debate took up their station on forms and chairs placed within convenient hearing distance; a chairwoman formally took the chair, and the business of the evening began. We glanced over the faces before us, and mentally classified their owners. The æsthetic element, the sternly logical element, the aggressively radical, the romantically conservative, the prosy, the quizzical and the humorous elements—all had their representatives in the ladies present, or our powers of observation were *nil*. Differing styles of garments helped our investigation. We had before our eyes every variety of typical costume, from the artistic to the rough and ready, or to the ultra fashionable. Our inspection was broken in upon by the announcement from the chair of the motion before the meeting:—"That Henry Irving has, by his dramatic genius, well earned his place as foremost among living English actors." A certain Miss Rees—a lady tall of figure, intelligent of face, and animated of manner—sprang forward to throw down an oratorical gauntlet, and challenge all comers. She spoke with ease and spirit, never pausing for thoughts or for words in which to clothe them.

After a few words of personal explanation, which does not concern us here, Miss Rees struck her first warlike note, by asserting roundly that all which she had to say might be resolved into one argument—that of Irving's undoubted *success*. The difficulty of obtaining seats at the Lyceum, the crowded state of stalls and boxes, and the wedged-in condition of the mass of humanity in the gallery were all brought forward as indications of the justice of the proposition entrusted to this speaker's care. "You may tell me," pursued the lady, facing about, and casting a half-defiant glance over her audience, "that Irving plays to the

gallery, and that accomplished critics have pronounced against him. Well! at this point comes out the radicalism of my nature—a radicalism by no means confined to politics. I have a profound faith in the *vox populi*—in the voice of that common people, who, on some of the deepest problems ever submitted to the human race, have given a true verdict, when the cultured and the great have gone astray." Here Miss Rees paused to take breath, to sip water, and to enjoy the applause elicited by her sentiments. But she quickly resumed, with a skilful change of tone, marking transition from declamation to narrative. "The first occasion on which I saw Irving, he played Hamlet. I went to the theatre with an unbiased mind, and when the chief actor entered, in the second scene, I was disappointed with his appearance; he looked too cross even for the moody prince. My attention wandered, but, after a while, it was arrested by the perfect intonation of a short speech which Hamlet addressed to Polonius. 'You cannot take from me anything that I will more willingly part withal, *except my life*.' I shall never forget the depth of pathos contained in the last three words; it seemed to me that the key-note of the play had been struck, and that I saw into Hamlet's very soul. 'Irving is, at least, an actor,' I told myself. In the scene, with the players, I observed in Hamlet a princely dignity, which I had missed before, and at once I recognized that its absence, at first, and its introduction here, were both judicious. When the prince first appears, he is under a cloud, but when he is with the players, the old charm comes back to him, and, for a while, he is the Hamlet of the past. 'Irving is not only an *actor* but an *artist*,' I determined, reaching my second point, and, thenceforth, all criticism was lost in admiration."

We have not time or space to give all Miss Rees' observations in her own words. She lavishly praised the eloquence of Irving's attitude in the Play Scene, his wonderful by-play, his satirical mask to Ophelia, and his passionate speech to the King. Then she passed to encomiums on that actor's "Othello," and to comparison between himself and Booth. Great admiration was expressed for the representation of Shylock, and something not unlike an apology offered for the enactment of Romeo—a part for which Irving was physically unfit. Then the speaker passed from Shakespeare to pronounce the performance in "The Bells" a psychological study, and to contrast with it—as representing

the actor's versatility of genius—the assumption of the totally different character of Jingle. Miss Rees concluded, in some such words as these: "I do not claim for Irving that he is that faultless monster, a piece of perfection. There are spots, doubtless, on my sun, and we shall hear the names of them during this debate. Nevertheless, surrounded though I am by competent judges, I do most confidently propose the motion, which stands in my name—'That Henry Irving has, by his dramatic genius, well earned his place as foremost among living English actors.'"

Miss Rees resumed her seat amid cheers, and a Mrs. Brooksbanks rose to lead the opposition. This speaker was a self-contained lady, with a relish—unless her face belied her—for quiet satire. She began a very clever speech, with the remark that comparison with other members of the profession was the only reasonable ground on which to establish Irving's superiority over other actors, and she reminded the meeting that Miss Rees had not compared Irving's impersonations with those of any English actors. Booth, to whom some reference had been made, was an American. Tooth and nail this speaker opposed the argument, that because Irving had achieved success, therefore he is great. "I am," said Mrs. Brooksbanks, "one of that small minority who hold that intelligence is the true basis of taste. What is that mysterious mixture, the taste of the British public? Many persons found it impossible to tear themselves away from 'Our Boys;' that piece had a longer run than any of Irving's plays. 'Drink' is not necessarily a work of art, because the public throng to see it. If the British play-going audience were less immense, lengthy runs would be better criterions of success than they can be at present, for they would mean, not streams of fresh auditors, but the frequent reappearance of the same playgoers.

"The question," briskly continued Mrs. Brookbanks, "is often addressed to those who do not admire our 'leading tragedian'—'Why does the British public like Irving?' Now, clearly, that is not a fair inquiry to put to us; we should be puzzled to answer it. Let the British public"—with a sly smile—"give a reason for the hope, to us inexplicable, that is in them."

The speaker linked her hands together, brought them down upon the table, and proceeded:—"When an actor is fairly launched, he cannot possibly keep afloat without talent, and that Irving does

possess a certain talent I readily admit, but it is not *commanding talent in his art.* He shows his talent in judicious management, in delighting our eyes with wonderful mountings and scenic effects, and in securing the co-operation of the leading actress. Now, let us look into his capabilities as an actor.

"An actor ought to be able to stand, to walk, to move quickly, to speak, to declaim, and to give some appearance of spontaneous movement. In insisting on these points we are not demanding great things from an actor; we ask as much from any human being. But instead of standing, Irving fidgets; instead of walking, he lurches; instead of moving quickly, he gives three portentous strides; instead of speaking, he makes unintelligible sounds; instead of declaiming, he rants; and he is incapable of simulating spontaneous movement. 'Is the language Greek or Hebrew?' asked a friend, who went with me one evening to hear this great actor. 'Neither; it is Irving's English,' I answered, 'but unless one knows his plays, word for word, one is apt to be confused.'"

The audience laughs, and Mrs. Brooksbanks goes quietly on. "'Ah!' say the great man's friends, 'but there is in Irving *that* which makes his faults of minor importance.' I doubt whether such faults could co-exist with great intellectual ability. But what is this subtle quality which is so vaguely commended? Is it poetry? At least we have not in Irving's performances the poetry of motion; and poetical motion is the highest range of intellectual ability which an actor can attain. It was poetry of motion which struck Charlotte Brontë with overwhelming force when the happiness was given to her of seeing Rachel. Irving's tragedy is melodrama, under a specious form and another name. He has the power of representing such a character as his famous one in 'The Bells;' and where melodrama is possible in Shakespeare he succeeds. Miss Rees tells us that she will not lay much stress on Irving's Romeo, because he is not physically suited to the part. Well, to me his physical defects are of minor importance. My objection goes far deeper. I hold that he could not conceive Shakespeare's Romeo.

"And what conception has he of Hamlet—of that saddest of sad minds, through which breaks the light of an intellectual humour contrasting with the soul's despair? Where is the humour under Irving's treatment? From beginning to end we have

nothing but melodramatic gloom. When we see him in the ghost scene, what likeness has Shakespeare's Hamlet, who is in our mind's eye, with the grovelling form on the Lyceum floor? Those of us who had the misfortune to see Irving's Hamlet or Macbeth discovered, unless I am hugely mistaken, nothing tragic in the skulking murderer there represented. Who that is loyal to Shakespeare's memory can sit calmly to see libels on his greatest works?"

Mrs. Brooksbanks, like Brutus, paused, as if for a reply, then she took up the thread of her discourse. "'The Falcon' was, happily, not left to Lyceum management. In it appeared an actress who has the perception to know what parts suit her, and who possesses quick intelligence, an artistic temperament, nervous mobility, grace, charm, and poetry. All these gifts are not enough necessarily to save an actor from the perils of caprice. Sarah Bernhardt has them all, and she ends where Rachel begins. But which of all these qualities did Irving display in Romeo? 'Romeo, come forth; come forth, thou fearful man,' cries Friar Lawrence in the play, and Shakespeare's epithet acquires a new meaning when addressed to Irving. Mrs. Kendal's acting—not to name that of any other occupant of the stage—gives the negative to the motion before the meeting. I cannot think so poorly of the English stage as to give to Irving the foremost place among English actors."

Loud cheers greeted the conclusion of Mrs. Brooksbank's speech. Several other ladies addressed the meeting, and opinion seemed pretty fairly divided on the merits or demerits of Irving's histrionic performances. After the ball had been kept rolling for some time, to the entertainment alike of players and lookers-on, Miss Rees rose to reply to the opposing speeches. She made several points in the course of her oration. Her first observations were directed to criticisms on her arguments respecting success and greatness. "Success," urged Miss Rees, "is a mark of merit in an actor, though not in a moralist or a teacher. The function of the actor is *to please;* if he pleases, he has succeeded."

At the close of Miss Rees' speech, votes were taken by a show of hands; and Irving gained, by a narrow majority, the suffrages of the Society.

We passed reluctantly from the comfortably warm room, and

the amusingly warm debate, into the fog and mire of Gower Street. Our part of auditor had afforded us much entertainment. We trust that this short account of the proceedings has not utterly failed to incite some answering amusement on the part of our readers. It is not necessary to say that we in nowise identify ourselves with any of the opinions expressed in the debate. Our pure and single motive—while we occupy a rising ground, removed from the din and heat of the conflict—is to give a slight sketch of a battle, fought on a point of dramatic interest, by members of the "Women's Debating Society" of University College.

Felicity's Song.

From "The Squire."

THERE'S a jingle to make a maiden glad,
And flush the skies above her,
The clink of the spurs of her soldier lad,
"I am a faithful lover."
Sun is shining, flow'rs are blooming,
Light and bloom are not for aye,
What if sob and sigh are looming,
Hear the jingle while you may!

There's a music to make a maiden sad,
And pale the skies with sorrow,
The ring of the spurs of her soldier lad,
"Farewell until the morrow."
Sun is setting, flow'rs are drooping,
Light and bloom are not for aye,
Willow youth with grief is stooping,
While the jingle dies away.

There's a knell that will make a maiden mad,
And veil the skies for ever,
The jolt of the spurs of her soldier lad,
"Farewell, I loved thee—never."
Moon has risen, glow-worm glistens,
She has lost the sun for aye,
But another maiden listens
To the jingle—far away.

Arthur W. Pinero.

Fedora.

By W. F. Waller.

THE long-expected, long-trumpetted "Fédora" has been produced at the Paris Vaudeville, with a success, which, already in the first week of its existence, when these lines were written, bids fair to become phenomenal.

That such a play is precisely worthy the reputation of "M. Victorien Sardou de l'Académie française" may be doubted. But that "Fédora" places its author at the head of playwright-prestidigitation, and proclaims him the very Maskelyne-and-Cooke of theatrical legerdemain may be readily allowed. No other living writer, in fact, could have so brilliantly cheated an audience of human beings out of their reasoning faculties for the space of three hours on end, with the most fabulous stage-fable of modern times. But the cheat, however brilliant, becomes evident when the fable is not acted, but narrated. And the fable of "Fédora" may be succinctly but sufficiently narrated in this way.

The drama opens at St. Petersburg, under the Nihilistic dispensation of to-day.

We are at the Hôtel of the Minister of Police, and in the private apartments of Wladimir Garishkine, his son. The French valet, Desiré, is waiting his master's return. In conversation with him is a dog-faced Jew jeweller, come to tout for an order for a *corbeille* that is likely to be wanted soon. Wladimir, a prodigal young man of pleasure, is about to replenish his exhausted purse by a marriage with a millionaire widow, the Princess Fédora Romazoff. Fédora adores her *futur*. No wonder, then, that, not having seen him that evening as she expected, the Princess, presently enters on the scene in search of him; for the times are terrible, and a Garishkine only too likely to have ill befall him.

The Princess's previsions prove but too correct. The noise of wheels is heard. Wladimir's carriage has returned. But it is not he who appears in the doorway. It is a bullet-headed man with a shaven, sallow, Calmuck face—Gretch, the *sous-chef* of police.

From the bedroom beyond comes the sound of hurrying feet, and frightened voices. Then a hush; and then a low faint moan.

No need to tell Fédora what has happened. Wladimir is there.

"Dead?"

"Dying."

Before anyone can stay her she is at the door of the bedroom and has opened it.

In the reddish light, round about the bed, the surgeons are seen at their work. There are the blood-stained towels. There is blood in the basins you see carried away. A general ghastliness of detail seizes the spectator by the throat, as it were.

The wounded man expires. Across his dead body the Princess registers a vow of revenge. Meantime, Gretch has commenced an interrogatory. From this it results that Wladimir's expedition to the queer street, in the remote suburb where Gretch had found him desperately wounded and alone, was undertaken in consequence of a letter which an unknown woman had brought him that morning.

What has become of this letter? Wladimir was seen to place it in the drawer of the writing-table yonder. The key is in the lock; the drawer is opened; no letter.

Who has had access to that table? One person only it appears, the Count Loris Ipanoff. And Loris Ipanoff is suspected of Nihilism. The case is clear—at least to Fédora. Louis Ipanoff has abstracted this letter. Therefore it was he who planned the *guet-à-pens* in the queer street, and it is he who is Wladimir's assassin.

She turns like a tigress upon the detectives.

"*Mais arrêtez-le donc, imbéciles! Il va fuir.*"

From the window she watches the entry of Gretch and his myrmidons into the house opposite, where Ipanoff lives. With one of those *rugissements* that she alone can utter, she beholds him, as she thinks, arrested.

Ipanoff, however, is not so easily had. He succeeds in making his escape, and reaches Paris in safety. To Paris, then, the scene is transferred.

Fédora, intent upon her vengeance, has followed Wladimir's assassin, with Gretch and a few of his familiars in her suite. Her plan is to inveigle Loris into a love affair with her, *à la* Gabrielle Fenayrou, and—since, his crime being political, he cannot be extradited—to hand him over to Gretch one dark night. By Gretch, the Count is to be embarked in a steam-yacht lying convenient in the river, taken down to Havre, and there transferred to a Russian gun-boat. Once in Russia, the political nature of his

crime is to be ignored, and Loris Ipanoff is to die the death of a common murderer at the hands of the common executioner.

Circumstances appear to favour the execution of this delectable plot. Loris, who has never known of Fédora's intended marriage with Wladimir, and has, therefore, no reason for suspecting her intentions towards himself, when they meet, falls in love with the Princess in the most convenient fashion possible. But Fédora's sentiments towards her victim get rather "mixed" about this period. Loris makes love in so agreeable a fashion that she begins to fancy it was not he, perhaps, after all, who put that revolver-bullet into Wladimir. One night, when they are guests at the house of a *compatriote*, and are left alone by the rest of the company to discuss their little personal affairs, the Princess introduces the subject. Then follows the best scene of the whole play. The Count admits that he is under an accusation of too serious a character to admit of his returning to Russia, albeit he, with a peculiar emphasis, asserts his innocence of any criminal act.

But of what is it that they accuse him?

Of the murder of Wladimir Garishkine, he says.

Ah! But he is innocent?

Yes.

Something in his tone makes her doubt. He must be made to say more. She turns upon him scornfully:

Innocent! And he has never defended himself! And he has run away! And he can live under this infamy! And he can ask her to share it!

So she gets, at last, the truth out of him. Not the whole truth, of course, or there would be an end of the play, and there are two more acts to come; but the truth, nevertheless, as far as his answer goes.

But, before he makes confession, he takes her hand in his, and looks into her eyes, and asks her if she loves him honestly, loyally wholly? In her burning curiosity to hear what he is going to say she responds, word for word, as he would have her.

Well?

Then he tells her that it was he who shot Wladimir.

It was! Ah! And she tears away her hand, and recoils in fury.

"Ah! Assassin! assassin!"

It was no assassination, the Count avers.

"An accident, perhaps?" she suggests, sardonically.

"A punishment," he returns.

What can he mean? There is something yet that he has not told her—that he must tell her. And he is going; and, if he goes now, he may escape her, who knows?

She brings him back. She smoothes her face. She smiles on him. She practises "the woven paces and the waving hands" of Vivien upon him. She sinks down, at last, in those convolutions you wot of, and draws him close to her, and she is all Delilah for his secret as she whispers in his ear:

"Come, tell me. Why did you kill him? Tell me."

But he objects that this is neither the time nor place for such a confidence. To-morrow.

No! no! How can he ask her to wait till to-morrow, when three words to-night would suffice? He must tell her all, to-night. Listen. She is going home. Let him follow presently. The little gate that opens into the garden will be unfastened. She will be alone. He will come?

He will. He covers her hand with his kisses, ere he leaves her. She smiles on him to the last. As the door closes on him she springs to her feet, a vengeful Alecto, wringing from off her hand, as it were, the imprint of his lips. And there is a poisonous triumph in her hiss, "*Ah! bandit! Je te tiens!*"

In the third act we are at the hotel of the Princess, in the Cours-la-Reine—the most deserted spot, after nightfall, in fashionable Paris.

Whilst she awaits the coming of Ipanoff, Fédora gives her instructions to her secret police. The Count will enter by the garden-gate unmolested. As soon as she has got from him all she wants to know, the Princess will dismiss him by the *grille* which opens on the Quai, where Gretch and his men will be in ambush. This settled, the Princess, "from information received," is enabled to despatch to St. Petersburg a denunciation, which will insure the arrest and incarceration of a brother of the Count's, and thus enhance her revenge. Gretch then disappears. Loris enters. And Fédora hears the truth. Yes. It was he who killed Wladimir Garishkine. But why? Wladimir was the lover of his, Loris', wife. And the Count produces documentary evidence of what he advances.

The situation here is—though something will have to be said of

the way in which it is brought about—intensely dramatic and exciting. Fédora reads, under Wladimir's own hand, assurances of love eternal addressed to another woman, and references no less galling as to his real motives of his contemplated union with herself. And this is the man she loved! This the man she mourned! This the lover she has sworn to avenge! Ah! heavens! what has she done? And Loris is innocent—Loris whom she has plotted to destroy—Loris whom they are waiting for, yonder, in the ambush on the Quai! If he leaves her to-night he is lost. Loris must not go. And when he urges that for her sake he must, and when she dares not tell him that for his life he must not, leave her, then passionately she flings herself upon his breast, passionately her arms enlace him.

"Stay," she murmurs.

The dénouement follows rapidly. The lover's paradise is soon broken in upon. The train Fédora has laid, and forgotten, explodes in due course, and blasts her new-found felicity. Terrible news comes from Russia in the fourth act. Ipanoff's brother, Valerian, arrested at Fédora's denunciation, has perished in his prison. Ipanoff's mother has died under the blow. And Loris will know directly whose hand it is that has slain them both, for the secret worker of all the ill that has befallen him and them is known. Boroff has discovered that his friend's evil genius is a woman, and Boroff will be there in half an hour to tell Loris this woman's name.

An abyss opens at Fédora's feet. Loris will know her for what she is. It is that which appals her. Not that Loris, who has sworn to kill the woman, should kill her.

Stay! there is one chance for her yet.

In the wonderful scene that follows, Fédora, with a power and passion that at last reveal to Loris whose cause it is she is really pleading—Fédora pleads the cause of this woman. But the truth, the horrible truth, flashes out upon her lover.

"C'était donc toi!" he cries.

The lover disappears, and the man. There remains only the Tartar. And in an instant the Tartar has her by the throat. She struggles, not for life, but that she may not die by his hand, for she has snatched something from her bosom, and it is at her lips as she gasps out to him to hold off, for that which he wants to do is done.

The poison she swallows is prompt—"O true apothecary!"—and potent enough to kill her there and then before him. In his arms she breathes her last. As he rises abruptly from the sofa where he has placed her, the corpse rolls down again upon the floor—an "effect" that must be seen to be appreciated as it deserves.

As Loris rushes in horror from her room, the curtain falls.

The piece, it will be gathered, is a tissue of improbabilities of the most impossible character—a tissue which a moment's reflection rips to pieces, at any and every stage of the action, almost.

A man receives a letter from his mistress appointing a secret interview. He does not destroy this letter, but places it before witnesses in the drawer of a writing-table, in a room to which not only the husband of his mistress, but the woman whose millions it is so essential he should marry, have both access at all hours. And as if that were not enough, he goes off to his rendezvous leaving the key in the drawer, also! If he had locked that drawer and put the key in his pocket, his *tête-à-tête* would not have been interrupted by the husband, he himself would not have been shot, and—there would have been no play.

Having pistolled the seducer of his wife, Ipanoff takes the next train to Paris. Why? It is absolutely necessary to the plot that he should do so; but, with all that documentary evidence in his possession, which he subsequently produces to Fédora, there is no other reason why he should not have comfortably remained at home, where he could have cleared himself in five minutes.

However, he runs away, and the Princess follows him on a "personally-conducted" vendetta. In order that she may do so, we are asked to swallow the enormous improbability that Ipanoff, living on terms of social intimacy and equality with her and with Wladimir, was absolutely ignorant of that approaching marriage between them, which is a matter of common talk amongst lackeys and Jew jewellers. But then, Ipanoff must have no suspicion of the Princess's errand, for he is to fall in love with her. She, on her side, whom we left raving for revenge upon the murderer of her betrothed—this feather-brained *policière*, whose "plot" for the kidnapping of her enemy smacks of Charenton—this hysterical epileptic, whose "rage of the vulture," in act i., becomes "love of the turtle," in act iii., simply and solely for the benefit of act iv.—this phenomenal Fédora falls in love with him. Inter-

mediately comes the grand scene in which Ipanoff avows that it was he who slew Wladimir. Dramatic, wonderfully dramatic, before the footlights, but idiotic the moment the gas is turned off it. If Ipanoff killed Wladimir, and the killing was no murder, but chastisement, for what was it chastisement, and why did he kill him? As the Princess remarks, three words more would explain all. And it is precisely those three words that Ipanoff refuses to utter, until the next act. Why? Because, if he uttered them sooner, the curtain would have to come down then and there. If he said straight out: I killed Wladimir Garishkine, not because I am a Nihilist, but because he was the lover of my wife: the Princess, thus enlightened, would have no motive for perpetrating that denunciation of Ipanoff's brother; and, then, what becomes of the catastrophe?

So the *éclaircissement* is kept back; the denunciation is made; and Gretch and company are posted in ambush outside. And then Ipanoff clears himself alike from the charges of assassination and of Nihilism, and then, as it is now getting well into the small hours, appears, not unnaturally, to be desirous of going home to bed. However, the Princess throws her arms round his neck, hugs, implores, and so forth, to persuade him to stop. Why? Because of Gretch and company outside, whom a word from her would have got rid of forthwith. Only, if they were thus got rid of, the great Sarah would lose her great "flopping" scene, which would be a pity. Still, Ipanoff cleared, and Ipanoff now her lover, why does the Princess forget to annul that terrible charge she has made—out of her own head, apparently—against his brother? Merely because that charge annulled, the brother and the mother and she herself would all be alive at the finish, and there would be consequently no strangulation-business, and no death-agony required. Howbeit, in the matter of this "Fédora," "to remark the folly of the fiction, the absurdity of the conduct, the improbability of the events, were to waste criticism upon faults too gross for aggravation," as I read in a page of Johnsonese that came under my eye curiously *à propos*, just now. Criticism were the rather wasted on "Fédora," because its faults, however gross, will probably in nowise interfere with its success. Here is where M. Sardou's legerdemain comes in. So brilliant, so perfect, so continuous is his *escamotage*, that you no more see these faults at the time, than Tilburina saw his Spanish fleet. Not, indeed, for

Tilburina's reason, because they are not in sight, but—which after all comes pretty much to the same thing, perhaps—because you are never given time to see them. Once this *Voyage à travers l'impossible* has come to an end, once you are outside again on the matter-of-fact asphalte of the Boulevard, once you have regained proprietary rights in your own eyes, and the grip is off your throat, and the tension off your nerves, once, in short, you are yourself again, and quit of Sardou and Sarah, why, then, of course, the foolishness and the absurdity and the improbability come out strong. Then, though, *le tour est joué!*

As to the interpretation. If no one but Sardou could have written "Fédora," nobody but "la grande Sarah" could have played the piece. I say the piece, and not the part, because "Fédora" is Sarah, and nothing else to speak of: a *duo* for a single voice. They were in doubt for a long while who was to be Sarah's partner in this performance, but the lot—not altogether an enviable one—at length fell upon Berton. Fourteen years ago, Sarah, then a *débutante*, was playing very much the same game she plays in "Fédora" with Berton's father, in the "Drame de la Rue de la Paix," at the Odéon. There, however, the elder Berton had it all his own way. The son is hardly "in it," as Ipanoff, with Sarah now. Every other part has been cut down to mere *comparse* level, though every other part is admirably filled. Nothing could be better, of its kind, than the Doctor of Boisselot—better made up and accented than the Jew Tchileff of Colombey, more characteristically imperturbable and sinister than the Gretch of Michel; while it was as difficult to recognize, in the "correct" *attaché*, de Sirieix, the Vois who was so delightful as the prison-governor in the "Voyage d'Agrément," as it was to believe that the red-haired little moujik, Dimitri, and the charming *ingénue* of "Tête de Linotte," were equally the "creations" of Mademoiselle Depoix.

But Sarah! Only that eccentric, but ecstatic, "derangement of epitaphs," which Mr. Lillyvick applied to the performance, on a memorable occasion, of "the unrivalled Miss Petowker, of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane," only that—and, perhaps, not even that—can describe Sarah's Fédora. It is, indeed, "absorbing, fairy-like, tumultuous." Her own especial Lillyvicks maintain that it gives to one of no less desert the laurel greener from the brows of Champmeslté, and of Clairon, of Lecouvreur, of Dorval, and of Rachel. There be others who will have it that the "grande

tragédienne" is, if truth were told, but a "grande saltimbanque" after all. The fact is, Sarah is an unique combination of both. Hence, she is able to call in tumbling to the aid of tragedy, and bring the plastic arts to the portrayal of the passions; to "flop" through four such acts as these night after night, and finish with a death-scene warranted correct, to the very last kick and quiver. Hence, in short, Sarah is able to do what no other woman living could do—play Fédora.

Romeo and Juliet.

"How is't, my soul? Let's talk, it is not day!"—*Romeo and Juliet, Act iii., Sc. v.*

LOST in the passion of a long embrace
Warm rapture lights each love-transfigured face,
Entwin'd in one another's arms they cling
Like rose-boughs waving in the breath of Spring;
Their liquid eyes with mystic meanings burn,
Their kissed-curv'd lips unto each other turn,
Their pulses thrill—the blood leaps through their veins,
And life seems reeling in their dizzy brains,
They murmur pantingly and close—they sigh,
Swoon on each other's breast and seem to die,
Then swift-reviving, lose themselves again
In a wild transport of ecstatic pain;—
Soul-maddened, tempest-tost, and passion-driven,
Unfit for Earth, and unprepared for Heaven!

Marie Corelli.

Miss Marion Terry.

MISS MARION TERRY, whose photograph appears in this number of THE THEATRE, is the third of the four gifted sisters, of which Miss Kate (Mrs. Arthur Lewis) and Miss Ellen Terry are the first and second, and Miss Florence Terry the youngest. The subject of this record made her first appearance on the stage in July, 1873, at Manchester, in the late Mr. Tom Taylor's arrangement of "Hamlet." Though only in her eighteenth year, Miss Marion Terry played Ophelia on the occasion; and on October 4 of the same year we find her making her first appearance in London at the Olympic Theatre, in "A Game of Romps." A few months afterwards she acted in a revival of "Much Ado About Nothing" at the same theatre. Miss Marion Terry was next engaged for the Strand Theatre, where she appeared as Clara Mayfield, in Mr. H. J. Byron's "Old Soldiers;" as Lilian Gaythorne, in the same author's "Weak Woman;" and in other characters. Her success at the Strand Theatre led to her being selected to play Dorothy, in Mr. W. S. Gilbert's "Dan'l Druce," on its production at the Haymarket Theatre, on September 11, 1876. On January 20 of the year following, at the same theatre, she acted Galatea in Mr. Gilbert's "Pygmalion and Galatea;" and during this engagement she also appeared as Zeolide in "The Palace of Truth," and as Lydia in "The Love Chase." On October 3, 1877, also at the Haymarket Theatre, she acted Belinda Treherne, in the first representation of "Engaged;" and she then played Florence Bristow, in "The Crushed Tragedian." Miss Marion Terry then migrated to the Olympic Theatre, where, on March 25, 1878, she appeared as the heroine in Mr. Gilbert's play, "The Vagabond." In August of the same year, during the absence of Miss Ellen Terry from the Court Theatre, she played Olivia, in the play of that name, founded by Mr. W. G. Wills on "The Vicar of Wakefield." In the following October she returned to the Olympic Theatre to act Louise in a revival of "The Two Orphans," and on Saturday (afternoon), November 8, she played the heroine in a drama, in five acts, by Mrs. Holford, entitled "Marie de Courcelles;

MISS MARION TERRY.

'I seem as nothing in the mighty world.'
—TENNYSON.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN SPECIALLY FOR 'THE THEATRE' BY THE ST. JAMES'S PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPANY, 72, PICCADILLY, W.

or, a Republican Marriage." On March 24, 1879, still at the Olympic, she impersonated the heroine in Mr. W. S. Gilbert's "Gretchen," and on April 26 of the same year, during Mr. Frank Harvey's occupation of the theatre, she appeared in "Married—Not Mated." Miss Marion Terry was next engaged by Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft, under whose management she played at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, making her first appearance there on September 27, 1879, as Mabel Holne in "Duty," Mr. James Albery's adaptation of M. Sardou's "Les Bourgeois de Pont-Arcy." On November 22 following, at the same theatre, she played Blanche Haye in a revival of "Ours." On January 1, 1880, the opening night of the Haymarket Theatre, under the management of Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft, Miss Marion Terry acted Clara Douglas in "Money." In a revival of "School" at the same theatre, on May 1 following, she represented Bella, and on February 5, 1881, still at the Haymarket Theatre, she acted Mabel Vane in "Masks and Faces," and in the same revival she also played, later on, Peg Woffington. Miss Marion Terry then transferred her services to the Court Theatre, where she appeared on November 7, 1881, as Mimi in Mr. Dion Boucicault's play of that name, and on the 30th of the same month, in her original character of Belinda in "Engaged." She was then specially engaged to act Bathsheba Everdene in "Far from the Madding Crowd" in the first performance of that play at the Prince of Wales Theatre, Liverpool. Returning to the Court Theatre, she acted Gwendolin Pettigrew in the first representation of Mr. G. W. Godfrey's comedy, "The Parvenu," on April 8, 1882, and on the reproduction of the piece, on November 14 last, she reappeared in her original character. On the occasion of the last appearance on the stage of Miss Florence Terry, which took place at the Savoy Theatre, on Wednesday afternoon, June 21, 1882, Miss Marion Terry acted Lady Hilda in Mr. Gilbert's "Broken Hearts," and appeared as the clerk in the trial scene from "The Merchant of Venice." Miss Marion Terry played Lady Constance in the first performance of "Comrades," at the same theatre, on December 16, 1882.

The New Costume Society and the Stage.

By H. Beerbohm Tree.

THE January number of *Time* contains a violent but, I venture to think, somewhat misdirected attack on the above Society. Mr. A. H. Wall is evidently so genuinely concerned in the cause at which he tilts, that it may not be uninteresting to him to learn something of the Facts with whose shadows he battles with such Quixotic fervour.

Mr. A. H. Wall starts upon the basis that the Costume Society is established for the purpose of "subordinating sentiment, feeling, and true dramatic effect to a hard, bald, dry, unsympathetic regard for archæological correctness." As a matter of fact, the object of the Society (so far as the stage is concerned) is to *aid* the sentiment, the feeling, and the dramatic effect by encouraging archæological correctness. Mr. A. H. Wall avers that it did not disturb the spectators of Shakespeare's plays "to find Brutus and Cassius wearing much the same kind of clothes as Bacon and Raleigh;" nor did it signify that Garrick played Macbeth and Hamlet in silk stockings, knee-breeches, and powdered wig. Why not go further, and argue that Othello might as well appear in a white tie and patent leather boots; and if played by a white man, why truckle to the vicious taste of a nineteenth-century audience by taking the trouble to black his face, in deference to a hard, bald, dry, unsympathetic regard for archæological correctness? But it is precisely because this unimaginative age refuses —in the teeth of Mr. A. H. Wall—to be contented with this mode of representation, that the Costume Society may find some scope for the exercise of its labours. That Mr. Planché did excellent work in the same direction is not denied; but that that work, *in regard to its illustrations*, is not invariably all that the requirements of the time demand, is equally certain. The taste displayed by Mr. Irving in the revivals at the Lyceum Theatre has undoubtedly had the effect of educating the public up to a certain standard of correctness; and who shall say that these beautiful productions do not owe something to the decided advance in the matter of costume and general archæological correctness?

Mr. Wall says that—"Firstly, 'the play's the thing;' secondly, the actor; thirdly, scenery, costumes, and accessories." Precisely. But it has never been pretended by this Society that the costumes *should* be of the first importance. Again, Mr. A. H. Wall appears to argue that, because Shakespeare committed some trivial anachronisms, therefore those anachronisms should be cherished by a grateful posterity, and emphasized by way of compliment to their illustrious author! Such trivial anachronisms were, I venture to think, though Shakesperian, nevertheless faults, and arose from the author's want of local or technical information. Certainly not from a love of anachronism, for Shakespeare who, with the characteristic of true genius, was scrupulously and minutely correct, would have been the first to discard that which common sense condemns. Do we not on the contrary see in his works a marvellous regard for realistic detail? And if Shakespeare as a manager did not dress his characters in the costumes of the period they were supposed to represent—if his Romans wore Elizabethan dresses instead of Roman togas, the omission may have been less due to his contempt for the proprieties and dramatic unities, than to the fact that there existed in those days neither costumiers nor a Costume Society, to which latter I have every reason to believe that, had he lived, Shakespeare would have been one of the first subscribers.

Where, then, is the line of correctness to be drawn? It should clearly be the ambition of the actor to approach as nearly as possible in every respect to the character he is supposed to represent—just as it should be that of the painter to reproduce on the canvas the truest picture of his subject. Nothing indeed could better illustrate this necessity than the charming collection of anecdotes which form the greater part of Mr. A. H. Wall's attack on the Costume Society. According to the opinion of this gentleman, it would be ridiculous in the representation of an old comedy "to wear full-bottomed wigs and buttons as big as apples, while passionately making love to belles in head-dresses four stories high." But here again the amiable writer will find, on reference to the plays belonging to this particular epoch, that the exaggerated costumes and coiffures then prevailing accurately reflected the spirit, the sentiment, and the artificial manners of the time, and can therefore only have the effect of aiding the imagination of the intelligent and not wholly ignorant spec-

tator. How often do we not even now witness the spectacle on the stage of a "Juliet" or "Pauline" whose costume suggests nothing so much as the gala apparel of a nineteenth-century Opera Bouffe actress?

That archæological correctness should ever take precedence of dramatic effect would indeed be highly lamentable. But in such an event it may be confidently hoped that some avenging scourge will arise, whose mighty army shall scatter the ranks of usurping Realists, and rear above their mangled corpses a victorious banner, emblazoned with the Rules and Regulations of the Royal Society of British Anachronists!

Going to see the Pantomime.

'TWAS an afternoon performance of the pantomime, and I
Caught enjoyment from the rapture of the merry children by,
And the plaudits and commotion
Bringing back an old emotion
Made me boyish, till a picture turned my laughter to a sigh.

'Twas a picture—poem—story—yea, a tragedy amid
All the pantomimic fooling—'twas a girlish feature hid
In the shadow of a shoulder
Where a mother did enfold her—
Twas a girlish feature smiling, but alas, beneath the lid

Was a void as blank as darkness—she was blind to all the play,
She was blind to all the antics, all the splendour and display;
And the keen-eyed youngsters round her
Never guessed that blindness bound her
In that shadow of the shoulder where she turned her face away.

But the mother fleetly whispered ev'ry novelty in view,
All the dancing, marching, grouping, and the pointed humour too,
And the fair-haired nestled daughter
Smiled at what the whispers taught her,
While the music and the dancing deftly inner visions drew.

They were visions more enchanted than the artist's painted scene,
More entrancing than the pictures seeing child had ever seen,
Airy, fanciful, unreal,
Painted by her young ideal,
But to her a wondrous haven in a wondrous clime serene.

Yet the sightless joy was touching, deeply touching to behold :
All the features animated, yet the seat of smiling, cold ;
All the girlish beauty glowing,
Flaxen hair about her flowing—
Yet between her gleaming lashes unillumined darkness rolled.

Once the boist'rous children shouted, laughed and shouted at the prank
Of a dancer as he dangled his long limbs so lean and lank.
This the mother tried to teach her,
But the motion could not reach her—
Then she wept because the humour to her darling was a blank.

But a smile outshone the weeping when her tearful eyes beheld
How her darling comprehended other humour that compelled
Boys to roll in random laughter
And the girls to titter after—
Oh, a smile with greater sweetness ne'er against a grief rebelled.

What relief to see them joyous, see the daughter self-beguiled,
What a joy to note the mother smile whene'er her darling smiled ;
And to see, as both were going,
Each a kiss of love bestowing—
What a picture to remember, that fond mother and her child !

William Tirebuck.

In the Provinces.

By George Lancaster.

IN a hurried tour through several of our leading theatrical towns to see the Christmas productions in the provinces, I have been struck by two facts. The first is the completeness and brilliancy with which some managers produce their pieces, and the second is the rapid decline in public favour of the music-hall element introduced into pantomimes. For general excellence I would especially point out the brilliant representations given this season at the Grand Theatre, Leeds, the Grand Theatre, Glasgow, the Alexandra Theatre, Liverpool, and the Theatre Royal, Manchester. All these theatres vie with each other in magnificence and capital management. The pantomime at the Grand, Leeds, was the first of the provincial ones which I witnessed, and no more beautiful setting for an elaborate stage production could be chosen than Mr. Wilson Barrett's superb theatre. It is, indeed, a beautiful building, and I envy the good people of Leeds the possession of so fine a theatrical house. Mr. Wilton Jones' libretto of the pantomime—"Robinson Crusoe"—sparkles with wit and humour, and the title-rôle is taken by Miss Fannie Leslie, who gives a charmingly sympathetic performance. All the scenery is capital; in particular, the dazzling beauty of a scene called the "Golden Island," painted by Mr. Stafford Hall.

After a nine hours' railway journey, through miles of country under water, I found myself in Edinburgh, with the rain pouring in torrents, and it was more than a relief to be seated in the comfortable Theatre Royal, enjoying another version of "Robinson Crusoe," remarkable for its real pantomimic fun and freedom from vulgarity. Mr. J. B. Howard has selected a good company of actors and actresses, and the result is that the entertainment is a success, made all the better and brighter for the presence of crowds of children, who can be taken to enjoy themselves without fear of their being taught vulgarity or something worse. Miss Carrie Lee Stoyle—an experienced and clever actress—plays Robinson with grace and vivacity, and

a graceful representative of Polly is found in Miss Susie Montague. Miss Lily Meredith sings very pleasingly in the character of Hibernia, and Mr. Sidney Harcourt is legitimately funny as Will Atkins. A children's dance of dolls is much appreciated in this production, which is distinctly an acting pantomime well acted. At the Princess's Theatre, in the same city, "Les Manteaux Noirs" was being performed by a good company, in which the chief honours were carried off by Miss Emma Beasley, who was very successful as Girola. Miss Madge Stavart was pleasing as the Queen, and Miss Julia St. George made a charming Clorinda. Whilst in Edinburgh I saw the site of the new theatre which is to be built for Mr. J. B. Howard and Mr. Fred. Wyndham (Mr. Howard, as is well known, is the present lessee of the Edinburgh Theatre Royal, and Mr. Wyndham is a son of the former lessee). The new building is to be in Grindlay Street, which is situated in the west end of the town, and the architect is Mr. R. Rowand Anderson, A.R.S.A. It is hoped that the new theatre will be ready in September, in which case it will be opened by Mr. Henry Irving before he goes to America, and it is interesting to note that substantial support has been given to the theatre both by Mr. Irving and Mr. J. L. Toole.

"Oh! poor Robinson Crusoe," I murmured, when I found myself in the spacious Grand Theatre, Glasgow, witnessing another performance of the same story. But fortunately for me, the pantomime was so gorgeously placed upon the stage, that the eye never wearied of the beautiful pictures; and even at the Alhambra I have seldom seen anything to surpass the splendour of this spectacle. When watching this elaborate production there is scarcely time to admire the acting which, indeed, is entirely dwarfed by the stage-effects. Miss Emily Spiller is the Robinson Crusoe, and Miss Laura Clement sings beautifully in a rather small part. A humorous Widow Crusoe is Mr. John S. Chamberlain—also the stage-manager of this wonderful exhibition—and quaint representatives of Will Atkins and the Captain are found in Mr. Sidney Hayes and Mr. J. B. Gordon. The Glasgow Gaiety Theatre pantomime is "Beauty and the Beast," and, if rather dull on the whole, it is well worth seeing if only for the sake of the unctuous and unforced humour of Mr. George Cecil Murray, in a Scotch part. Miss Irene Verona gives a spirited bit of acting, and Mr. C. J. Hayge is good

as a demon. "Little Red Riding Hood" at the Princess's Theatre, Glasgow, appeared to me to be chiefly noticeable for the imbecility and vulgarity of the libretto, and the poorness of the stage-management. Miss Katie Ryan, as Boy Blue, is bright and fascinating, full of life and vigour, and a charming, if quiet, Miss Muffit comes from Miss Nellie Burdette. Little Katie Neville acts cleverly as Little Red Riding Hood, Miss Marion Huntley plays prettily as Jill Warner, and Jack Horner is made very attractive by Miss Florence Harrington. I do not like men in women's clothes on the stage, but I must admit that the Mother Hubbard of Mr. Ramsey Danvers is not only a really humorous representation, but a clever and artistic success. His performance is spoiled, nevertheless, by an unnecessary piece of—well, downright vulgarity—in which he indulges with a figure of her Majesty the Queen and another, during the procession scene. At the Royalty Theatre, Glasgow, "Fun on the Bristol" was being played at Christmas time.

Coming to Liverpool I found another treat in store for me by the production at the Alexandra Theatre, of "Blue-Beard," the only pantomime on the subject this year. Mr. Edward Saker has evidently spared no expense over the entertainment; and Mr. John Brunton has excelled himself in the beauty of his painting. Nothing more artistic in its way than the Fairy Glade in summer, which, by a wonderful mechanical arrangement, changes to a scene representing the depth of winter, has been seen. The bombardment of Alexandria is another fine tableau, and the whole thing is capitally done. Selim is played by Miss Nellie Bouverie, one of the brightest and sharpest of our burlesque actresses. She is never still for a moment when she is on the stage, and her life and gaiety seem inexhaustible. Miss Kate Lovell, as Fatima, succeeds in being interesting and very charming. Miss Fanny Mariott is irresistibly funny as Pertina, and Miss Agnes Milnes is pleasing as the fairy. Yet again "Robinson Crusoe," at the cosy little Prince of Wales Theatre, in Clayton Square, where the hero is played with refinement and art by Miss Lilian Francis, and where Miss Constance Moxon sings with taste and feeling. Mr. W. Morgan is funny as Will Atkins, and a special feature is made of some real animals which are introduced into the pantomime. Captain Bainbridge gave a season of six weeks of the Carl Rosa Opera Company at the Court Theatre—a handsome and valuable

building—and the engagement as I write continues to be brilliantly successful.

From Liverpool I went to Manchester, where I had the good fortune to see Miss Retta Walton playing the hero in "Sinbad"—in place of the lady engaged for the part, who was ill—and capitally she played it too. Her unaffected and spirited acting was most enjoyable, and she gave a capital rendering of the character. But a large share of the honours fell to Mr. J. L. Shine, as Thinbad, a good performance by a promising comedian. Miss Alice Burville was charming as Zorilda; and Mr. George Walton, Mr. Julian Cross, and Mr. Lionel Rignold, played well in other parts. "Little Robin Hood" was given at the Prince's Theatre, with nearly the same cast as on its original production at the London Gaiety. A capital acting pantomime is that of "Beauty and the Beast," written by Mr. John F. McArdle, for the Manchester Queen's Theatre. Perhaps Miss Lottie Harcourt was most successful of all the company, and she certainly deserves much praise for the manner in which she acted and elaborated a small part, and made it, by her able performance, a chief and valuable feature of the production. In Mr. Fred. Ferrani the management had secured not only a tenor singer with a sweet and pleasing voice, but a tenor who can act as well as he can sing—a rare combination—for the two qualities of singing and acting are not often found together. Mdlle. Emilie Petrelli sang prettily as the Beauty; Miss Elise Grey was too charming to be a cruel, wicked witch; and Miss Evelyn Maitland was an interesting and pleasing representative of a fairy.

Nottingham was the next town that I visited, and after a journey through part of the "black country," with its smoke and weird fires, it was refreshing to find so charming a representative of Cinderella—the heroine of Mr. Thomas W. Charles's pantomime at the Theatre Royal—as Miss Ethel Pierson. She raised the part, in spite of itself, from the level of pantomime to that of comic opera ("comic" opera so-called in order to distinguish it from "grand" opera), and invested the character with a charm and grace which is seldom met with in such cases. And not only did Miss Pierson act so well, but she sang enchantingly, her rendering of the pretty ballad, "Dreaming," being beautiful. Miss Lizzie Mulholland made a splendid Prince Paragon, and the other characters were well performed.

Birmingham boasts this year of two pantomimes on the subject of "Sinbad the Sailor." That at the Theatre Royal has been written by Mr. Frank W. Green, and is an excellent work. Miss Grace Huntley plays Sinbad with grace and spirit, Miss Margaret Soulby is attractive as the Fairy, and Miss Jennie Walton is bright and vivacious as Hafiz. The burden of the pantomime falls upon Mr. Fred. J. Stinson, who makes a hit by his able and enjoyable comedy. The other "Sinbad," that at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, is not, to my mind, a very brilliant one, and it is spoiled by the introduction of music-hall "favourites." I, for one, cannot see the humour of Mr. Witty Watty Walton, the grace of Miss Rense Roby, or the especial qualifications for the stage of Miss Marie Loftus. The efforts of Mr. John Wainwright, a good actor, and Miss Helena Lisle, a capable actress, were smothered by the opposing music-hall "talent."

"Dick Whittington and his Cat" is the title of the annual at the Bristol New Theatre. Mr. C. H. Stephenson has produced a good book, and the scenery surpasses anything previously witnessed on these boards. Miss Julia Warden as Dick is a great favourite, her vivacious acting and delightful singing winning the hearty approval of many admirers. Alice is played by Miss Amy Grundy, a painstaking actress, who gives a lively and natural rendering of her part. Her singing and acting are alike good. Mr. H. Lewens is a reliable actor, and makes up well as Sir John Fitzwarren. Mr. George Thorne creates no end of amusement as Jack Idle. Mr. Mark Barraud, who has long been connected with this theatre, has produced an admirable scene of Old Cheapside, and another beautiful picture of the seacoast of Morocco. At the Old Theatre Royal, Bristol, Mr. Andrew Melville has produced what proved a successful pantomime, entitled "The Three Jacks—Jack in the Box, Jack Horner, and Jack the Giant-killer," which is full of a variety of attractions which are highly appreciated. Mr. Alfred Whyatt has charge of the scenic department, and a considerable amount of praise should be given to him for his painting. The management selected an actress of no mean ability in Miss Emily Randall, who plays Jack the Giant-killer. This lady gives a most acceptable rendering of the part and sings and dances skilfully.

FRANK C. BURNAND.

'Happy thought! Just like me.'

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN SPECIALLY FOR 'THE THEATRE' BY THE ST. JAMES'S PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPANY, 72, PICCADILLY, W.

Francis Cowley Burnand.

An Autobiography.

I WAS born on November 29, 1836. In due course I was sent to Eton, where I wrote a farce, and acted in it at my tutor's, the Rev. W. G. Cookesley's. Thence, after an interval of severe illness, followed by some very pleasant months of private tutelage, I went up to Trinity College, Cambridge. Here I started the A.D.C., or Amateur Dramatic Club, which is still flourishing.* H.R.H. the Prince of Wales became Honorary President of the Club. Three or four gentlemen now playing in the best London companies came from the A.D.C. It was not, however, meant to be a nursery for the stage, but simply a social recreation for theatrically-inclined undergraduates who did not care about the formalities and restraints of the mock Parliament represented by the debating society known as "The Union." Among the more volatile undergraduates there was as strong an objection as there is among the respectable poor against "entering the Union." About my degree time I became studious, but still more so after I had taken my degree, when I "stopped up" to read, in order to settle whether my profession should be, not "Church or Stage," but Church or Bar; and after a year's anxious consideration given exclusively to the former, I ultimately decided, after another brief but important interval, in favour of the latter (what an escape Church-goers have had!); and having previously qualified myself by "eating" most of "my terms," I finished the remainder, attended lectures at the Temple, read with a conveyancer, was "called" by Lincoln's Inn, commenced practice at the Middlesex Sessions, worked with a Common Law junior, was utterly disillusioned, made a few appearances at the Old Bailey, two at Westminster, and was an occasional visitor to the committee rooms of the House of Commons, to which attractive business I should most certainly have stuck to had it not been that I had already begun to earn a fair

* For details see my "History of the A.D.C.," published by Chapman.

sum by my pen, and this being, at that time, a far more seductive *modus vivendi* for an impecunious young gentleman of a sanguine and impulsive temperament, with a young wife and a "commencing" family, the halls of Westminster saw me no more, and I have, of course, no doubt that a distinguished legal luminary, or at all events a wealthy Parliamentary barrister, was there and then lost to the world. Still, if Mr. Anthony Trollope did not begin his novel writing till he was forty, and if Mr. Richardson, the author of "Sir Charles Grandison" and "Pamela," did not commence his literary career till he had turned fifty, perhaps there might be some chance for me in the New Law Courts, where, on the opening day, I resumed, for the space of three hours, my "full forensic costume." When I think of an eminent Q.C. who was once a Guardsman, of a Cardinal who was in the Household Cavalry, and of many more wonderful changes effected quite in mid-career, and attended with the greatest possible success—I—I am inclined to—well, to remain as I am; and if I can get an occasional "Colonel," a "Black-Eye'd Susan," an "Our Club," "Family Ties," a "Diplunacy," a "Turn of the Tide," a "Corsican Bros. & Co.," and a few "Happy Thoughts" to visit me from time to time, I shall have no great cause to complain. Between eighty and a hundred of my pieces have been published. I saw in a review of Mr. Archer's "Dramatists"—which I have not yet read—that the fact of authors having published in such a form as "Lacy's Acting Edition" proves how low they themselves rated the literary value of their work. Speaking for myself, I availed myself of the only evident means of publication then existing. My first object was to get what I could, which was not as much as it ought to have been, and I was utterly ignorant and comparatively careless, as were most of us then, I believe, concerning the distinction between acting-right and copy-right both here and in America; and was only too glad to sell when everybody else, as far as I knew, sold, and to get the same price as other dramatic authors received—which was precious little, I know; but in those primitive days any earnings were sweet, and to make money at all was a delightful and almost overpowering surprise. Thus it was that I lost all command over "Ixion" and other similar burlesques of mine in America, where performing companies were making pots of money out of them, playing them all over the States. The most successful company in this line

was under an English manager—bless him. When I once understood the pecuniary value of this kind of work, I ceased to publish. It is wrong to suppose that "Lacy's Acting Edition" had not a big sale. It had; and I should think the publisher who purchased our copyrights made about three or four hundred per cent. by the transaction, especially if at the same time he had found somebody as inexperienced as myself to sell the acting rights as well. I did this with more than one piece written by me at Cambridge, which, when I was looking about to see where the money was to be picked up in London, I was glad to part with for a few pounds to Lacy; and one of these, "Villikens and his Dinah," was played (unknown to me) in various country theatres long before my first piece was produced in town, and had already brought in a tidy sum to its astute purchaser, the publisher.

How we were done, right and left, in those days of small sums—done for all sorts of rights which not the most recently-started dramatic author among us ever thinks of parting with now! I think Mr. Dion Boucicault, as author, actor, and manager, let in the light on the relative position of author and manager. It was he who explained to me the just and equitable arrangement of percentages.

My connection with *Punch* began about seventeen years ago. I had begun on *Fun*, just then started, in company with Tom Hood, jun., H. J. Byron, J. Prowse, W. S. Gilbert, Brunton, and Mat Morgan. I suggested the scheme of a burlesque serial—the first in that particular form—to indicate the sensational style of to-day, and to imitate the *London Journal* frontispiece. The *Fun* proprietor, a looking-glass dealer, didn't "see it;" whereupon I wrote to Mark Lemon, who did; and within a month I was on the staff of *Punch*, and sitting at the historic table with Mark Lemon, Shirley Brooks, Horace Mayhew, John Leech, Charles Keene, Percival Leigh, Tom Taylor, and W. M. Thackeray, who introduced me as "the new boy." *Hæc olim meminisse juvabit.* I shall never forget Thackeray at the *Punch* table, and when entertaining the *Punch* staff in his own house.

Of my work on *Punch* there were two or three serials before I hit on "Happy Thoughts," which, when subsequently published, soon went through fifteen editions, and its success astonished no one more than myself. I am told that the most successful of my paro-

dies was "Strapmore," by Weeder, and that went through seven editions within a fortnight. A close parody requires the most careful work, and the author's peculiarities cannot be entirely mastered from one book. Not until I find myself writing an ordinary letter in the style of the author I have been studying do I feel quite sure that I can safely start the parody. The new "Sandford and Merton," admirably illustrated by Mr. Linley Sambourne, was very popular, and we've got another on the *tapis*. "Across the Dark Continent" was extracted from *Punch* and sold as a pamphlet in America. A friend of mine returning from the States told me that its sale had been immense. This was gratifying, of course. "Happy Thoughts" was translated into Dutch. How it went I don't know. It looked very funny. I suppose that with my brother dramatic authors—for 'tis as a dramatic author that my likeness is exhibited here—I have done my full share of journalism, and written on all sorts of subjects, from Shakespeare to the musical glasses. If the foregoing sketchy kind of biography, jerkily put together, will interest some of your readers you are welcome to it. With best wishes for the future of your magazine,

I remain, yours truly,

F. C. Burnand.

Our Play-Boy.

"COMRADES."

A New and Original Comedy, in Three Acts, by Brandon Thomas, and B. C. Stephenson. Produced at the Court Theatre, Saturday, December 16, 1882.

General Sir George Dexter, K.C.B.	Mr. John Clayton.
Arthur Dexter	Mr. D. G. Boucicault.
Captain Darleigh, V.C....	Mr. Charles Coghlan.
Doctor Gumbleton ...	Mr. H. Kemble.
The Hon. Penley Chivers	Mr. Arthur Cecil.
Tom Stirrup	Mr. W. Mackintosh.
Mr. Blackett	Mr. E. Burnley.
James	Mr. Gilbert Trent.
Timothy Hopper	Master Phillips.
Lady Constance Birklands	Miss Marion Terry.
Lady Dexter	Miss Carlotta Addison
Miss Grant	Miss Erskine.
Perkins	Miss Merrill.

THIS successful play may be likened to a jewel with a flaw in it; though the blemish is one which will scarcely be noticed by the ordinary spectator, unless the undoubtedly existing fault be pointed out by an expert. The reason why the flaw in the play does not injure its effect on the stage is, that the mistake is outbalanced by merits, and leads up to very moving

situations and to strongly emotional positions. With an audience, the cunning of the scene outweighs an improbability. To the critic, the blunder of the play is almost too serious ; but with the mass of spectators the heart stands up and answers, "I have felt." The drama of "Comrades" *has* heart in it. It has passages that are moving, stirring, working, warm with emotion and quick with pathos ; and playgoers will overlook much if they be impressed and touched. There are moments in "Comrades" which may beguile men of their tears ; and the drama, though it may be that it interests piecemeal, instead of working through a continuous thread of story, yet does interest ; and it was enthusiastically received on the first night by an audience that was genuinely pleased and excited. The play has not been over-cordially welcomed by the critics. They saw strongly and clearly its defects, and they pointed these out without, one would think, sufficiently recognizing its good points. "Comrades" is the work of a very young playwright, Mr. Brandon Thomas, an actor at, I believe, the St. James's Theatre. Mr. Thomas has had the assistance of the more experienced Mr. B. C. Stephenson, the clever adapter of "Impulse ;" but it is a little surprising that this piece should have had such help, since the faults in it are precisely those which a practised playwright would, one would think, have avoided.

Sir George Dexter is an old general, with a tender wife and a promising son—a son who will follow in his father's footsteps and be a soldier ; but Sir George has been married once before, and was left a widower with one son. For some (in the play) inexplicable reason, he will not mention his first marriage to his second wife ; and he even allows his eldest son to grow up bearing another name than that of Dexter, and exposed to the taint of the bar-sinister. This improbability—to put the case mildly—struck one almost immediately, but was forgotten during some strong positions, very powerfully acted ; and then one always expected that Sir George's morbid action would be explained as the play went on. It was, however, never explained ; and the authors would have done better to have trusted to the romance and pathos of illegitimacy. Lady Dexter might have been represented as a fantastic loving wife, who had vowed never to give her love to a husband who had loved another woman. When, in a play, a sane man behaves like a maniac,

there is strong need of dramatic explanation ; and the want of it leaves a confused stain which runs all through the web of the play.

Captain Darleigh, whose happiness is almost wrecked by a belief that he is illegitimate, is the "Elder Brother" of the olden dramatists. Invited, as a regimental comrade, by his younger brother to his father's house, the gallant soldier of fortune wins the love of Lady Constance ; but, when he learns the blot which, as he is led to believe, rests upon his birth, he thinks himself no mate for the high-born beauty, and, in a scene of passion and of power, he withdraws his pretensions, and abandons the hope of marriage. His father, in another fine scene, refuses to tell his son the truth about his birth ; and though Darleigh learns from Tom Stirrup the fact that his mother was honourably married, all his hopes and all his life seem wrecked. The war-trumpet blows, and the two sons sail for an Indian campaign. Darleigh wins a second time the Victoria Cross ; though the reward of valour is inexplicably given to the younger brother, whose life Darleigh saves, and the brothers return to England, home and beauty, the General being, meanwhile, very ill. In his delirium the old warrior tells his wife the long-hidden secret of his early marriage, and Lady Dexter spontaneously and generously welcomes Darleigh as the elder son. A projected marriage between Lady Constance and the younger brother is swept aside by a flood of rising passion ; and, the truth being fully known, Lady Constance and her noble lover fall into each other's arms, and the prescience of a moved audience hears the coming sound of wedding bells.

Such, in very brief, is the outline of the story of the play. Of its episodes no mention is made here ; nor do we allude to that unhappy dog. The drama—it is a drama rather than a comedy—is admirably acted. The first honours belong to Mr. Coghlan, whose personation of the hero is really splendid acting. He is excellent in his masterly delineation of repressed passion and suppressed emotion ; for, though passion and emotion are always indicated, they are never loudly expressed. Mr. Coghlan's art conceals the appearance of art. His Darleigh is gallant, high-hearted, chivalrous and honourable. It is, perhaps, an excess of punctilious tenderness which leads Darleigh, without proper explanation, to break with Lady Constance, and to risk the happiness of her life by leaving her to think that "another woman" is the

cause of his conduct; but the authors have depicted this somewhat overstrained scruple of delicate feeling, and Mr. Coghlan interprets their intentions admirably. His game-of-chess love-scene with the lady is delightfully acted. His two great scenes with Lady Constance and with his secretive father are full of subtle power and of quiet passion. Mr. Coghlan has a singular art in suggesting a reserve of latent force of character and of will. He indicates depth below the surface. You feel that, if the play took a tragic turn—that if murder, even, became necessary—the man would be there. He has a strength beyond that of the "young first man;" and this subdued power lends value to his impersonations generally, and, specially, to that of Captain Darleigh. He plays a strong and tender man; with tenderness veiling strength. Miss Marion Terry is graceful and gentle as Lady Constance, and acts the chess love-scene with delicious *naïveté;*—but why should she go out of her way to dress so badly? Miss Erskine, if she do not make all the points that Mrs. Gaston Murray would have made, yet succeeds in an absolute realization of the quaint character that she plays. Mr. Clayton lends all due weight and dignity to the General, who bears about with him the burden and the weight of an oppressive secret. Miss Carlotta Addison, though she cannot look matronly enough, plays Lady Dexter with feeling and with force. That accomplished artist, Mr. Arthur Cecil, is to be pitied in a part so fatuous and so feeble. Mr. Kemble, as an old army doctor, is thoroughly satisfactory. There is an admirable little rustic boy, who, also, will be a soldier, and is amusingly rendered by Master Phillips. Mr. Mackintosh, whose Gunnion proved him to be an actor of high and rare merit in character parts, made of Tom Stirrup, the Irish ex-dragoon, a distinct creation; and his life-like, energetic rendering of this somewhat difficult part was invaluable to the success of the play. Mr. D. G. Boucicault is pleasant and genial in the part of the younger brother, Arthur.

The writers of "Comrades" have worked in earnest, and the dialogue is simple, direct and to the purpose. Their work has no air of artificiality or trick. The general characteristics of the play are sincerity and strength. The scene in the second act—a wintry landscape and a corner in which a shooting party is to meet for lunch—deserves a word of distinct praise. The tone is so finely felt and so well maintained that the scene rises to the dignity of a picture.

"Comrades" teaches a lesson to critics. It shows that a play, strong in dramatic vitality, can live down a strong defect. The blemish in the work has been a lightning-conductor for critics, but it is almost atoned for by the results which follow, and by a passionate appeal to the human heart. The play should be seen, if it were only for the sake of the power and repose—of the light touch and serious purpose—of Mr. Coghlan's finished and forcible acting as Captain Darleigh.

"JANE EYRE."

A Play in Four Acts, by W. G. Wills. Founded on the novel of the same name by Miss Charlotte Brontë
First produced at the Globe Theatre, Saturday, December 23, 1882.

Jane Eyre ...	Mrs. Bernard-Beere.	Bertha ...	Miss D'Almaine.
Lady Ingram ...	Miss Carlotta Leclercq.	Adele ...	Mdlle. Clemence Colle.
Blanche Ingram ...	Miss Kate Bishop.	Mr. Rochester ...	Mr. Charles Kelly.
Mary Ingram ...	Miss Maggie Hunt.	Lord Desmond ...	Mr. A. M. Denison.
Miss Beechey ...	Miss Nellie Jordan.	Rev. Mr. Prior ...	Mr. H. E. Russell.
Mrs. Fairfax ...	Miss Alexes Leighton.	Nat Lee	Mr. H. H. Cameron.
Grace Poole ...	Miss Masson.	James	Mr. G. Stevens.

"JANE EYRE" is a curious example of a play which, without being deficient in strong dramatic situations, without lacking the poetical sweetness and tenderness which must always more or less distinguish the work of the author of "Olivia" and "Charles I.," still at its conclusion leaves the spectator dissatisfied. It is as though, during the working out of the drama, Mr. Wills had been conscious of an idea which he has never been able to grasp—a life-study of which he has been unable to get at the heart.

The first act seems to have been written more for the purpose of placing the various characters, with their several aims and ideas of life, before us, than with that of making them rivet our attention as well. But this is perhaps pardonable, and it is so contrived that when the curtain falls the general feeling is that of expectation. It rises again on the library of Thornfield, where Mr. Rochester is seated, anxiously waiting to have his fears confirmed as to whether or no Mason is already in England. His doubts having been proved groundless, one notices, little by little, his growing admiration for Jane. The contrast of feeling between Blanche Ingram and Jane, when he tells them of serious money losses which have just befallen him, is sharply and cleverly defined. Nor must the comedy scene, when Jane asks her

master's permission to leave for a few days, and the consequent *badinage* about the money be forgotten, so admirably is the effect of playful determination, combined with the tenderness of her farewell, conveyed by Mrs. Bernard-Beere. Passing over the subsequent comparatively unimportant events, we come to the gipsy scene, where Rochester, in disguise, tells the fortunes of those present, and lastly that of Jane, whose thoughts and desires he unsparingly reveals. They are left alone. She kneels at his feet in the moonlight, his words altogether engrossing her whole soul and mind; but scarcely does the truth begin to dawn upon her as to who the man is, when Rochester tears off his disguise with the words, "Jane, don't you know me?" What a fine situation could this be made! The girl not daring to realize what she has been betrayed into saying; the man possessing the assurance of her love, her affection, which nothing can take from him. But it is not so. We expect more than we get. All Rochester does is to say that he has obtained another situation for her, which arouses Jane into an all but open confession of her love for him, when suddenly the recollection of his engagement with Blanche Ingram flashes upon her mind. Surely the subsequent entrance of Blanche is a mistake dramatically and ethically considered? No woman in her position would have reasoned and preached in the way she does. Neither is it possible that Rochester would have allowed the girl for whom he had conceived such a mad passion, to be so insulted in his presence.

Now follows a scene which, for its strength, its beauty, and its perfect harmony to nature, could not be well surpassed. The man, by the influence of his great love, makes Jane's doubts and fears vanish, and compels her, by the strength of his nature, to yield to him her life and soul. The names of "master" and "servant" fade away; and when he has left her, what can be a more perfect picture than that which this woman makes? Her existence one supreme joy—her whole life expressed in the words, "He is *mine* now; no one can take him from me." Brighter and brighter do her thoughts become; her soul is full of a gladness almost too great, too deep for words, when suddenly a scream pierces her ear, followed by the most hideous laughter imaginable. Again does it come, but it seems to come nearer and nearer. Oh God! what can it be? Is there no one to help her, no one to shelter her? and crying out, "Edward, save me!" she falls down

in a dead swoon, just at the moment when a sliding-door in the panel of the wall is slowly pushed aside, and from it comes a creature so horrible, so loathsome, that the mind is literally spell-bound as the creature advances, with awful gesticulations and groans, towards the prostrate girl. The maniac's hand is just on her throat, when the door opens, and Rochester rushes in. In a second he is between them. Under his influence the maniac crouches towards the door, muttering and growling like an animal baffled of its prey, and with his arms clasped round the girl with the words, "Jane, my darling! you are safe," the curtain falls. It is impossible to describe the horror of this scene, it must be seen to be appreciated. On the first night the situation was jeopardized by the irritatingly calm entrance of Mr. Kelly. At such a moment no influence but that of the most exciting kind could have been upon Rochester. In no case would any man—much less one who loved the girl—have entered in such a cool deliberate way, or, having entered, have treated the appalling catastrophe with such *sang-froid*. Here it is where "natural acting" errs against Nature. In real life a Rochester would have acted here, or he would have belied his passionate nature. This is the one blot on a situation, which in all other respects leaves nothing to be desired. The third act takes place in the same room. Rochester has gone to London for a day, and Jane is left alone, utterly broken down in health and spirits, but happy beyond all words in the belief of her master's love for her. It is strange that Mr. Wills has thought it necessary to introduce Lady Ingram and her two daughters, Blanche and Mary, to tell the fearful secret of Rochester's marriage. Surely Blanche, having been the one to witness the arising of Jane's love, ought to have been the only one who had it in her power to pronounce the words which would kill and ruin it. Failing her, the priggish parson might have taken the task on his shoulders, but so serious a revelation would scarcely be the subject of a polite morning call! Jane is told the truth. The "dear master" is married. She is left alone with utter hopelessness and bewilderment staring her in the face. No! no! it cannot, it *must* not be true; and yet what about the letter she holds in her hand? To whom can she turn? Who is there that will stretch out a helping hand to rescue her from this awful darkness which has enveloped her body and soul? She is even more desolate and

alone than when she first came to Thornfield, for then—though she had none to protect her from the hardships and privations of her life—none to guide and comfort her—she did not feel this strange ache at her heart—no voice sounded in her ears—no face was ever before her eyes of a man in whose life is now centred her whole existence. Love, in those days, was to her a mystery, a thing to be wondered at, scarcely to be believed, so completely had it ever been estranged from her life. The awful sorrow is rapidly making all remembrance drift and fade away from her, when her eye falls on the letter she holds in her hand. It *must* be answered—its statement must be either confirmed or denied. How in her present frame of mind can she confront this man, who, perchance, has as wilfully played with her life, as a child with its toy? Stay! she must be calm! she must think of what is before her. This is no time for giving way—love must be put on one side, and pride must take its place, making her for the moment strong in her determination to know the truth. Thought upon thought arises as to who shall tell it her—till suddenly, in a second, Blanche Ingram's words echo in her ears, "In that letter you will find a person referred to—Grace Poole by name—why not demand the truth from her?" A mist comes before her eyes, a dead faintness at her heart.

Who so well able to tell her as Grace Poole, the guardian of this terrible woman? So the girl confronts her, and by the avowal of her love gains the reply which shatters her whole life. She can do nothing. She can only stare before her in blank hopeless misery, till a footstep quite close arouses her, and she feels that Rochester has come. No look does she give the man who has returned to her side full of hope and love. No explanation does she require or ask of him. "Is that woman your wife?" The words ring out with pitiless emphasis. Three times is the question repeated. She will have no evasion of it. She will hear nothing but the bare truth, and she will have the word which will bind them together for life or separate them for eternity come from no other lips but from those of the man she loves. His answer comes, "Yes." What is there for her to say? She utters a few words of simple unvarnished truth, overwhelming him with grief such as no reproaches could ever have aroused in him, and then woman-like she throws herself at his feet, and cries, "Forgive me for my words. My own dear master the time has

come when we must bid farewell for ever." Then all the spirit of the man rises against this awful power which is taking from him everything which is most precious. "By God! you shan't leave me," he exclaims, and then begins the persuasive reasoning which has proved the ruin and misery of so many women. The passion of the man, the whole strength and force of his nature carries her along with him. She has all but consented, he has all but made her promise to be his for ever and ever, when suddenly the awful scream, the hideous laugh, are again heard. Involuntarily they recoil from each other, his influence over her is shattered, broken, and with the words, "*She* stands between us," the curtain falls. It is impossible to speak too highly of the acting of Mrs. Bernard-Beere during the scene we have attempted to describe. From first to last she never lost her hold of the situation. It may be truly said that it was simply her acting, her determination, which made this scene the success it proved to be. Nothing could be more colourless, more insipid than the acting of Mr. Kelly at this anxious moment, just at the time when all the passion and strength of Rochester's love ought to have been brought into play. What the result would have been if the part of Jane had been presented in an equally timid manner it is not very difficult to see. The fourth act is an illustration of the calm which comes after a storm. How lovely is the landscape here before us, and the air of quietness which reigns over the place!

Here it is that Jane hears of the wife's death, and of her master's blindness. The way in which Rochester, thinking Mrs. Fairfax is by his side, tells her of the love he still has for Jane, is a pretty idea, and so is the subsequent conversation, when Jane kneels at his feet with the words, "Master! I am come." Here again, however, the situation is allowed to drop. The joy of these two may be *felt*, it can scarcely be said that it is *expressed;* to the end it is always the love of Jane, not that of Rochester, which seems strong and real, but the cause of this may arise from the way in which, as we have before mentioned, Mr. Kelly plays the character. It may be said of Mrs. Bernard-Beere that in looks and manners she fails to be anything like the heroine of Miss Brontë's book; but still on the other hand it must be admitted that the conception she has chosen to take of the character is a strong and powerful one, and whatever may be the ultimate success of this play it cannot be denied that it has raised Mrs. Beere to the rank of one of

the leading actresses of the day, a position to which she is thoroughly entitled, having worked as she has always done with such courage and perseverance. Of the other remaining characters there is but little to say. The hopes that were once entertained of the way in which Mr. Kelly would play Rochester can scarcely be said to have been fulfilled. There is a chance that he may improve as he becomes more familiar with his part, but it is not likely to be named as amongst his best work. The appearance of Miss D'Almaine as the maniac wife could not be better in its horrible repulsiveness. Miss Kate Bishop as Blanche Ingram looks well, but utterly fails to comprehend the aristocratic bearing of the woman. Miss Leighton makes a perfect picture of the old lady Mrs. Fairfax, and Miss Leclercq is greatly amusing as Lady Ingram.

Correspondence.

THE NEW SHAKESPEARE.

My dear Clement Scott.—You ask me to tell you something about the edition of Shakespeare on which I have the great pleasure to be associated, as a fellow-worker, with Henry Irving. Some five years ago I first suggested to him the idea of bringing out an edition of Shakespeare, in which that great dramatist should be mainly regarded as what he really was—a writer for the stage. Nothing came of my suggestion but some very interesting conversations; it was not till the latter end of last year that I again urged my reasons for such an undertaking—namely, that Shakespeare had been edited most elaborately from nearly all points of view, except from that which he himself took of his own work. Shortly after this a well-known firm of publishers proposed to Mr. Irving to bring out an edition of Shakespeare. He, most generously, remembering our conversations, suggested that I should be his coadjutor. It is not an "Acting Edition" of Shakespeare only upon which we are at work; for the entire text of each play will be given. The notes will be arranged on a new principle; and there will be several novel features in this edition, the nature of which will be announced in due time; but one main fact, which has been lost sight of by many of the student commentators of Shakespeare, will be held in view—namely, that Shakespeare was an actor, and that to his work, both in its highest and in its lowest features, was brought the technical skill of an actor. This fact may be a disagreeable one to those who look upon an actor as a superior kind of toy, contrived by Providence for the purpose

of affording so many hours of amusement in the afternoon, or evening, on the stage, to those who pay for the privilege of witnessing his efforts; and so many more hours of amusement in the social circle, at the supper table, to those who do not pay for that privilege. These people resent the recognition of any intellect in the actor as a personal slight upon their own: but there is no doubt, *pace* these superior persons, that to his persevering study of stage effect Shakespeare owed no small portion of his greatest qualities as a writer of dramatic poetry. I am much surprised to find that, while ample materials exist for the discussion of every other conceivable question connected with Shakespeare's work and life, there is a remarkable dearth of information, or even of conjecture, available regarding the stage history of his plays; when, and where, and how often they were acted, &c. &c. I shall be much obliged to any of your readers who may know, or, in the course of their reading, may light on any interesting facts relating to this subject, if they will kindly communicate with me. Letters addressed to "Westwood, Bracknell, Berks," will always find me; and will, I hope, meet with a prompt and courteous acknowledgment.—Yours ever,

F. A. Marshall.

Our Omnibus Box.

IT would be discourteous in the extreme not to acknowledge in terms of sincere gratitude the innumerable letters that have been received during the past month congratulating all who have been interested in putting before the public the most successful number of The Theatre Magazine yet published. The new series, as typified in the January number, has been received with all but unanimous praise, and our excellent publisher has already had practical proof of the public approval. Not a little of this success is due to the pictures, usually considered to be works of art, prepared for the magazine by the St. James's Photographic Company, which are the modern substitutes for the beautiful steel engravings that adorned the theatrical books of another century. The Theatre Magazine had a mission at the outset, to preserve in a handy and convenient form the records of our plays and the faces of our most famous players and authors. That mission is now in a fair way of being fulfilled.

I wish sometimes that clever actors could see how little eccentricities of costume on the stage jar against the full effect of serious scenes. There are several such instances in "Comrades," at the Court, that might easily enough be avoided. One of the prettiest scenes written in any play for some time past is that between Mr. Coghlan and Miss Marion Terry at the chess-table. It is charmingly played, and yet the audience is distracted by

Mr. Coghlan's unbecoming bicycle costume of knee-breeches and purple stockings. A bicycle costume on the stage is hateful; it prejudiced people against Edgar in the "Promise of May." I conclude Mr. Coghlan is supposed to have been playing lawn tennis; if so, why not in a dress as becoming as that of Mr. Dot Boucicault? But Mr. Coghlan's accentuated legs, partly hidden by the chess-table, are not so jarring in the scene, as Mr. Clayton's long Noah's-ark coat in the scene between father and son. This coat does not suit Myrtley Cover in the least, and it is very trying to the patience of the audience. The foreground of coat does not suit the background of landscape. When the unruly mind turns from the sentiment of the play to that coat, there is a disturbance.

And yet another grievance. Why do all the men appear at luncheon after shooting without a speck of mud on their boots? At such a season of the year it must have been muddy across the plough, in the lanes, and even in the grass rides of the cover, but all the boots and gaiters are spotless. I should suggest a little splashing in order again to harmonize with that delightfully painted background. Mr. Perkins with his scene takes us into the country, but the actors bring us back to town again with their mudless boots.

Mr. Slingsby Bethell writing to the papers says that he must in conclusion distinctly deny "that the laws regarding public amusements have been for years past in a state of chaos." I fear he has not well studied his subject. At any rate his denial is valueless in the face of facts. Let me refer him to a memorable saying by Mr. John Hollingshead, whose pamphlet, on "Theatrical Licences," I commend to the attention of Mr. Bethell. "The theatres still dance their hornpipes in the political fetters imposed upon them by Sir Robert Walpole, while the music rooms are governed by an Act of Parliament, framed to put down Moll Flanders and her tribe, but really meant to stop the singing of Jacobite songs in the pot-houses of 1750." The Lord Chamberlain exercises his power of licensing buildings within the metropolitan borough under the 6 and 7 Vict. Cap. 68. Yet within these limits there are two theatres, Drury Lane and Covent Garden, which exist without any licence at all. These are the patent houses. As regards Drury Lane, the Lord Chamberlain has denied that it is empowered to open without a licence, and yet since 1837, its proprietors have defied the Lord Chamberlain's authority. Further confusion is created by the fact that the vast districts of Chelsea, Kensington, Fulham and Hammersmith, having been created a Parliamentary borough since the passing of the Theatres Act, are outside the Lord Chamberlain's jurisdiction. The Court Theatre, for example, has no licence from the Lord Chamberlain, and therefore cannot be punished by him for breach of his regulations. If, therefore, a licence were required for the Shelley Theatre on the Thames Embankment, the Lord Chamberlain could not grant one under 6 and 7 Vict. Cap. 68, the last of the theatrical Acts of Parliament. If this be not chaos I don't know what is.

It is positively a treat to step into the Vaudeville Theatre any evening to hear the honest roars of laughter that greet the latest, and, in many respects, the very best, of the recent performances of "The Rivals." Mr. Thorne has discovered the secret that Buckstone and Webster discovered at the old Haymarket, "good new comedies if you can get them, if not, fall back on the old, and, above all things, a sound, vigorous, hearty and genial company." The horses taught to pull in the same team work best, and for old comedy Mr. Thorne's company is unrivalled. Where, for instance, could a better Old Absolute be found than Mr. William Farren, an actor not only impressed with the force and excellence of his father's traditions in the character, but honestly liking his work and revelling in the pure comedy of Sheridan. Mr. Farren, to put it vulgarly, seems to lick his lips over Sheridan. He sits down to the meal and honestly enjoys it. He has tried many fashionable kickshaws and made dishes, but he turns with relish to his good old English beef-steak—well, and onions for the matter of that. The scene between Mr. Farren and Mr. Henry Neville, as Old Absolute and Jack, is as good comedy as any one would desire to see ; it makes the tears roll down the cheeks with laughing—not laughing at vile puns and contorted jokes, but fun that bubbles up from the surface of human nature. Our actors are, I firmly believe, every bit as good, if not better than they were in old days, but they then had some strong human problems to deal with which they have not now. They were real men and women that Sheridan drew. The stage is rich in Mrs. Malaprops. Mrs. Stirling steps off the stage only to be succeeded by Mrs. Chippendale, who, somehow or other, though comparatively young, has inherited the mantle of old comedy. Mr. Thorne surprises everybody by his Bob Acres, a careful, able and discriminating performance, funny, bright, but never degenerating into clowning and buffoonery. It fits well into the picture-frame—which cannot be said of many Bobs associated with this play. They are generally all over the place, and spoil the *ensemble* by their extreme personality. The harmony of the comedy is heightened by as spring-like and maidenly a Lydia Languish as could be desired in Miss Winifred Emery—a really charming performance—by the Julia of Miss Alma Murray, and the Fag of Mr. Crauford. But the brightness of old comedy cannot be sustained alone by venerable characters, admirable and incisive as they are. There is no actor of his time who so well understands and supports the geniality of comedy as Mr. Henry Neville. He never allows a play to go to sleep, or dawdles over his work. His gaiety and spirit are infectious, and what I should call the proper temperature of comedy is admirably sustained by this hearty and ever industrious actor. "The Rivals" has already chronicled its fiftieth night, and is green and flourishing.

There is one scene in "Forget me Not" so striking, and one speech spoken by Miss Geneviève Ward so fine, that our readers will be glad to see it in print, in order that it may be studied and taken to heart after the excitement of the situation, and the tempest of the applause are over:

Sir H. What do you mean to do?

Ste. To stay in this house and go into the world with Alice, as her dearest friend, for six weeks.

SIR H. At the end of that time the marriage will be valid, and by your own showing you can do no harm. What can a woman with your antecedents do to gain a position in six weeks?

STE. With the countenance of the Verneys, everything. The world will believe them, when they declare, as they will, how misrepresented I have been. . . . . After all, is what I ask so very terrible? I have promised to be as good as gold, as pure as ice, as intensely respectable as poor old Foley. I shall do your Alice no harm.

SIR H. No harm? Why your very presence is an insult to her. Your incarnate wickedness poisons the air she breathes, as your schemes darken her beautiful and upright life. If you stay in the house with her for six weeks she will droop and wither like a blighted tree. Oh, Alice! my Alice! I would die to save you a passing pain, and I cannot sweep this contamination from your path!

STE. No, you cannot; and you shall not. You shall have cause to remember these words that you have said to me. I will sit at your darling's table, and sleep in your darling's arms. She shall be kind to me, and fond and loving, and shall learn to look to me for guidance and example. I will distil into her, drop by drop, the lessons that men have taught me. I will disclose to her, little by little, the sort of life that is led by sensitive lovers like you—you who talk about blight and contamination to the partners of your luxuries, the victims of your selfishness, the playthings of your pleasure: Is there no blight, no contamination, that a past like yours would throw upon the baby-innocence that you would link with it? Why may a man live two lives, while a woman must stand or fall by one? What was the difference between us two, Sir Horace Welby, in those bygone years, that should make me now a leper, and you a priest? that should give you the right to say to me, "you are Vice, and I am Virtue, sin on, or I damn you?" Who and what are you, that you should dare to talk like this? There would be no place in creation for such women as I, if it were not for such men as you!

An admirer of the dead poet sends me what she calls "A Retrospect of the Rosetti Pictures," at Burlingon House. Such appreciation and tender thoughts should not be lost, I think.

"The collection of paintings by D. G. Rosetti, now being exhibited at Burlington House, is one of those pleasures which, appreciated but once, leaves the spectator almost incapable of giving an unbiassed criticism, so many, so different are the thoughts they arouse. In not one of them can be found wanting, in more or less degree, indications of that wonderful power of imagination, that marvellous, almost unexpressible fascination of colour which tells of the hand of him whose poems have been the delight of all those who have read and appreciated them. It is curious that the more one looks at and studies these works of art, so much the more do they—each one of them—stand out as totally differing from the other. Though it may be affirmed by some that the face and figure are often repeated, can it be denied that there is one that has not a peculiar sense of colour and imagination entirely its own? Granted that in two or three instances the face of the woman is almost identical; is it not completely changed by the force of its surroundings? it may be by the wistful sweet look of an angel's head, bending in loving tenderness over the principal figure, as in "La Ghirlandata," or it may simply be the attraction of green leaves against a background of a blue impossible to describe, as in "The Day-Dream." At a first glance it is almost incredible to believe that these leaves are not embroidered—so marvellous is their effect—and it may be doubted if anything in the whole collection can be found to equal the superb colouring of this picture, except that of "A Vision of Fiammetta." In describing its

varied colours one might be tempted into a doubt as to their harmony. The three-quarter figure is clad in a reddish drapery, which appears almost pink compared to the bright red bird held above her head. The hair is of the richest auburn, and she is surrounded by apple blossoms. The whole effect is gorgeous, and yet the colours are so exquisitely toned into one another that there is nothing that can jar upon the eye in any possible way. "The Blessed Damozel" lingers on the imagination as one of those dreams of perfect beauty which are so difficult, so rare to find. Here is the living poem before our eyes. The expression of the face is entirely centred in the lines "The wonder was not yet quite gone from that still look of her's." Surely we must believe that this girl sees her lover who is represented beneath, looking up to the sky, separated from her by three angel heads whose eyes are raised to heaven, where may be seen the lovers wandering about in the groves of Paradise. This is, indeed, a living poem which must make everyone the better who thinks and ponders on it. Nor must we forget to single out of a collection, which is alike so varied and fascinating in its individuality, the picture entitled, "Veronica Veronesa." Who would not wish to linger over the face of this woman, dreamily listening to the song of the bird which for the moment has drawn her attention from the sweet tones of her violin? What a harmony do the rich folds of her olive-green dress make against the lighter tint of a background of the same colour; and do not those daffodils lying on the table before her look as though one had simply to stretch forth one's hand to possess them? No one, having once seen and appreciated Dante's Dream, will not desire to do so again, and not less the pathetic tale of daily life, entitled "Found." Would thousands of words ever be able to express what the face of this young countryman does, as he bends over the crouching girl and finds she is no other than the woman he loved in former days? The face haunts one in its life-like depiction of hopeless, unutterable misery! Let us quote two more instances before we close, showing with what utter diversity this great artist could depict the nature of women. "Sybilla Palmifera" is a face of the strongest character, full of perfect calm, self-possession and determination. Here is a woman who, as a queen, would demand and obtain the homage and obedience of her subjects. The whole colouring and pose is admirable, and it is almost regretfully that one turns to the study by its side, entitled "Beata Beatrix." Here everything is transformed. The picture is enveloped in shadow, and mythical and weird, indeed, is the strange beauty of this woman. The eyes are closed, the mouth is half open, and the whole face is lighted up with a love and passion which is only fully comprehended now that the hour of her departure draws near. A crimson bird bears to her the poppy-emblem of the sleep of death, and in the background, watching, may be seen Dante and the Angel of Love. It is impossible not to wonder at this face, so full of the desires and longings of life even at the moment when the grey shadows of death are stealing across it. What a world of thoughts and imagination it arouses, mingled with admiration for the genius of him who possessed alike the power of conceiving such a creation and that of giving it to us in its pure and perfect beauty of poetical imagination."

Amateur theatricals have been associated with the name of Dickens ever since the days of the performances at Tavistock House, and the "splendid strolling" of which we read in Forster's "Life of Dickens" and in the published letters of the immortal novelist. It is interesting to note that the tradition still survives, and that an amateur performance for the benefit of the Home for Incurable Children, at Kilburn Town Hall, on January 11th, was principally supported by members of the Dickens family. A connecting link between the company at Kilburn and that more famous one of a quarter of a century ago was formed by the appearance of Mr. Charles Dickens, the younger, who played a part with discretion and ability, and who, like his father, is an accomplished stage manager and general director. The bill consisted of the comedietta, "My New Maid;" Hoare's old-fashioned musical farce, "No Song, no Supper;" and Tom Taylor's well-known drama, "A Sheep in Wolf's Clothing." The whole performance was eminently satisfactory, but the event of the evening was the appearance of Miss Mary Dickens (the novelist's eldest grandchild) in the character of Anne Carew in the last-mentioned piece. Miss Dickens has determined upon adopting a theatrical career, and chose this opportunity to give her friends an idea of her capabilities. Her appearance, however, was on the present occasion distinctly *en amateur*, for we are glad to say Miss Dickens, unlike many aspirants to the honours of the stage, has the good sense to realize that acting, like every other art, is to a great extent a matter of training, and that it is her intention to serve a noviciate in the provinces and in minor parts before attempting to take a place in the front rank of her profession. It is pleasant to be able to record that in her performance at Kilburn, Miss Dickens gave evidence of possessing the true histrionic instinct. She is not yet a trained actress, but she showed signs of those dramatic gifts which training can foster and educate, but cannot create. We shall be disappointed if, in a few years, Miss Dickens does not secure for herself a distinguished position on the English stage.

"Juliet, Miss Fanny Lumsden." Some day, perhaps, Miss Lumsden will be Juliet. Meantime, I sit and wonder how many Juliets I can, just now and off-hand, recal. The earliest of all must be Miss Swanborough—the first Miss Swanborough. It was from one of the neck-ricking side-boxes of the old Haymarket that I beheld her mad-scene. It received my shuddering approval. That my approval, even in those days, was not undiscriminating is evidenced to me by the recollection of how Romeo's interminable death-rattle, and colicky kickings after the poison, made me laugh. The Romeo of that evening, by the way, was Miss Cushman—Charlotte, the more terrible of the two—she who once went down on her bended knee in Maddox's managerial room at the Princess's and anathematized him into giving her an engagement on the spot.

For another Juliet's all too brief appearance they have built up a balcony over against a certain stage-box, at the little house in the Strand, which—the stage-box, not the balcony—has contained a good many of us in its

time. And who sits presently on that balcony in the lime-light, and makes us, too, wish that we were a glove upon that hand that we might touch that cheek? Who but the archest, the winsomest, the most roguish, the most delightfully-impossible Juliet that you, who never saw her, can imagine—Marie Wilton. Her Juliet never went beyond that balcony, though—the more's the pity.

The balcony scene is set next in Oxford Street, at the Princess's; and there stands a little French *ingénue*, with fair hair, done up *à l'Impératrice*. And a diamond star on her forehead—Mademoiselle Stella Colas, to wit—a realistic Juliet, who, when she presently adjures gentle night to take her Romeo, after his demise, and cut him out in little stars, simulates the action of a pair of scissors!

Millicent Palmer at the Lyceum—a Juliet that promised well, but came to cruellest grief one night, when an inadequate bed gave way before the flats could close in upon the catastrophe, and Homeric laughter shook the house.

Then, something older than "fourteen, come Lammas-eve at night," perhaps, appears a Juliet of the *haute école*—of the *ancien jeu*—statuesque, Macreadyesque: Miss Faucit.

By-and-bye—it is the night of the 31st of August, in the year of grace 1867, and on the stage of the Adelphi—stands a Juliet with her armful of flowers, looking, in the white robe and dishevelled hair of the death-scene just ended, as she used to look in Ophelia. Again and again she bends before the roar of applause that greets her from the crammed house—greets her for the last time; for to-night, in Juliet, her last stage-part is played, and Kate Terry's theatrical life is ended.

Another Terry, and another Juliet, and *her* Romeo.

> "Sure such a pair were never seen
> So fitly formed to meet by Nature!"

But the Juliet of them all was Adelaide Neilson's, I think. She was always fresh in it, and always young; and withal, she had got to throw an amount of force and fire into her last acts which looked less like art than a sort of inspiration—and this was the more noticeable, because inspiration of any sort was generally conspicuous by its absence in the other parts she played.

The engagement of Mr. Coghlan at the Haymarket Theatre looks well for Sardou's "Fédora." As I read the story, with its passion and vigour, he is the one of the only English actors I can see in such a part. How Berton can have distinguished himself as the lover in such a play as this is to me a mystery. I once saw him play Hernani to the Doña Sol of Sara Bernhardt, and the sailor lover in "Jean Marie" to the same actress, and it was not a pleasing experiment. Mr. Coghlan, being an author as well as an actor, can adapt the play, write his own part, and contribute, I trust, greatly to its success in every department. But Mr. Coghlan is not adapting "Fédora;" the work has been entrusted to an able dramatist, who has protested for years, in no measured language, against the unwholesome practice of adaptation.

We have often seen young ladies going to church in fashionable districts with tiny and miniature editions of the "Book of Common Prayer," the Church Services, or "Hymns Ancient and Modern," contrived so as to hang by a ring on to the finger, or to be slung to the umbrella or parasol. The footman no longer is seen stalking behind "my lady" down Portland Place, or in the neighbourhood of Margaret Street and Wells Street, with a library of religious books. The hint has not been lost in the matter of playgoers' pocket editions. The neatest I have yet seen is called "Kent's Pocket Shakspeare" (W. Kent & Co., Paternoster Row), containing in a pretty little blue case the seven plays produced at the Lyceum Theatre by Mr. Irving. Each of these little volumes can literally go into the waistcoat pocket, and can be consulted with the greatest ease in the theatre. The only drawback is that they are not the "acting editions" of Mr. Irving's plays, which are of course invaluable to the dramatic student. On the subject of acting editions let me refer our readers to the letter from Mr. Frank Marshall, giving some notes in advance concerning the new Shakspeare of Mr. Marshall and Mr. Irving.

The story of the recent pantomime season is not an edifying one. So far as London is concerned, the attempt to borrow fun from the music-hall has turned out a grim and ghastly failure, and it is not likely that it will ever be repeated. These drolls are, in point of fact, not funny at all; they appeal to vulgar tastes; their method of art is coarse; their songs, unredeemed by wit, are inexpressibly silly, and they are as out of place in fairy stories and nursery legends, and as disconnected from the merriment that children love, as roast beef and mince pies would be at an August pic-nic at Burnham Beeches. For the sake of these tedious gentlemen the whole order of pantomime has been radically altered. Plots are rendered hazy, stories inconsequent, and the dramatic essence of an over-lengthy entertainment is squeezed out in order to familiarize the public ear with silly tunes and still sillier jingle. For the sake of these same gentlemen the harlequinade has been reduced to a shadow, and the children are no longer allowed to enjoy that which to them is the most amusing part of their long-anticipated evening. The storm so long brewing has now burst over the holiday entertainment. Sufficient rope has been given, and music-hall art, if indeed such a term can be applied to such silly minstrelsy, has successfully hanged itself. I have no doubt that the theatre managers can all quote reams of figures and oceans of statistics to prove that they never made more money in their lives than they have done this year, taking a leaf out of Mr. John Hollingshead's book, who, having discovered that the worst plays pay best, ingeniously argues that bad plays are preferable to good ones. In these days of competition and variety, there must be theatres for the brainless as well as for the educated, and it is not strange or wonderful that, out of four millions of inhabitants, the Verdant Greens of the Metropolis should support one temple in which to worship at the shrine of folly. But in the matter of pantomime, I do not think it would be safe to speculate on music-

hall art again on the strength of the abnormal success of recent so-called pantomimes. They succeeded far more by luck than management this year.

No fault can be found with the liberality of managers who devote their attention to holiday audiences. They have spent their money lavishly, if anything, too lavishly, but they have forgotten that over-elaboration produces weariness and depression, and that the complaints forced upon their attention this year have been, on the whole, well founded. A visit to the play is a recognized annual treat to every child, and parents have a right to be vexed when, thinking they will find a pantomime, they discover an entertainment that would be far better rendered and certainly more amusing at the local music-hall. The word music-hall should not necessarily be one of reproach, but the laws affecting them are in such a scandalous state that their proprietors are utterly unable to improve their tone or status. Music-halls are governed by Acts of Parliament framed before they came into existence, and no legislator has yet taken the trouble to inquire into the oppressive system of licensing that exists amongst the minor entertainments of the Metropolis. Music-halls might be improved and many proprietors are anxious to improve them in the interests of good taste and their own pockets. But the law as it stands hinders any reform.

As regards pantomime of the future, one of two things should certainly be done, either to please the children by restoring the harlequinade with all its funny tricks and constant succession of changes, or, for the sake of spectacle which is so popular, to make the annual entertainment a really comic review of the chief events of the year. This can be done without any personality or offence. If so much money can be spent on tinfoil and Birmingham armour, why cannot a little more be spent on jokes and songs? The age is not destitute of humour that can produce a Byron, a Burnand, and a Gilbert. There must be some Randolph Caldecott to amuse us on the stage, as well as in the nursery. Children were never better off than now for Christmas books; never worse off for Christmas amusements in the theatre. Refinement and grace creep into every other form of art but this. At holiday time they seem to be kicked out at the stage-door. Shakspeare was never so sumptuously adorned, and pantomime never so miserably vulgarized. In fact pantomime, as at present practised, is neither fish, flesh, fowl, nor good red-herring. We must reform it altogether.

A right merry evening may now be spent at the Strand Theatre, to which Mr. John S. Clarke has introduced a new acting version of Shakspeare's "Comedy or Errors." He has cleverly packed this ingenious farce, older than Shakspeare, and traced as far back as Plautus, into the smallest possible compass, and the consequence is that laughter follows it from one end to the other. Would this have happened if the play had been acted as Shakspeare actually wrote it? I venture to think not; and yet, according to Mr. Gilbert's theory, it was insulting to Shakspeare's memory and his fame to play it in any other form. The editing and re-arrangement have been done with reverent hands; an ingenious arrangement of scene enables the audience to see both the outside and the inside of the house of Antipholus of Ephesus, and Mr. Lewis Wingfield, availing himself of all the

poetical licence to which he was entitled, has made the stage brilliant with colour and interesting with design. The necessary curtailment has no doubt robbed the play of much of its acting significance. It becomes a farce pure and simple. There is, therefore, but scant opportunity for Mr. Clarke to display more than his accustomed brightness, his inimitable quaintness of utterances, and his consummate drollery. He is the firework that flashes through the play. I am one of those who believe Mr. John S. Clarke to be capable of strong and nervous passion, and that he has a reserve of emotional power. Here, of course, there is no opportunity for any such display. He is only a droll Dromio, and he can do nothing else. His companion in drollery is Mr. Harry Paulton, who does his utmost to divest himself of his nature. Mr. Paulton is, I fancy, a born Shakspearian clown—his manner is essentially Shakspearian. He would be the most wonderful Dogberry the stage could produce, and I should like to see him play Touchstone, the Grave Digger, and Autolycus. The quaintness of all Shakspearian fun is the very quaintness that Mr. Paulton possesses. But he does not really resemble Mr. Clarke in face, voice, or manner. The one is electric and spasmodic ; the other is solemn and dry. But, after all, precise physical resemblance is almost impossible to obtain except with twins. Better this than no "Comedy of Errors" at all. Mr. F. Charles made a capital and spirited Antipholus of Ephesus, his double being Mr. G. L. Gordon. One of the most interesting reappearances of late has been that of Miss H. Lindley, who played Adriana in that refined and graceful tone that is so very welcome. Playgoers may remember Miss Lindley in the Buckstone and Sothern days at the Haymarket. The lady has vastly improved as an actress since then, notwithstanding her retirement, and I should say she would be invaluable in the fashionable comedy of to-day. Miss Lindley has that best of all gifts, a sweet voice and distinction to support it. After the Shakspearian farce Mr. John S. Clarke plays the Toodles, and those who have never seen him play the Toodles never deserve to laugh again.

The Aylesbury Amateur Dramatic Club gave their first performance this year at the Corn Exchange, Aylesbury, on the 16th January, playing "Naval Engagements," in which piece Mr. John Terry was most successful as Dennis, and "The Jacobite," which was capitally rendered all round—Mr. L. Smeathman as Sir Richard Wroughton, and Mr. F. B. Parrott as John Duck, securing the principal honours among the gentlemen. The Club was assisted professionally by Miss E. Weber, who in both pieces displayed her usual ability and finish ; Miss Rosie Dixon, who played Lady Somerford gracefully and effectively, and Miss Kittie Claremont, who showed considerable versatility and refined appreciation of humour as Miss Mortimer and Pattie Pottle.

The Globe Amateur Dramatic Club gave a performance at Ladbrooke Hall, Notting Hill, on Saturday evening, January 20. The principal item in the bill was J. Palgrave Simpson's "Daddy Hardacre," a drama

particularly suitable for amateur performance. Mr. A. Berlyn's Hardacre was a specially good effort. His interpretation of the emotions of the miser at the loss of his gold was most effective. Mr. L. Berlyn as Charles Clinton was very fair, but seemed not to fit the part so nicely as he might. Mr. Charles Wotherspoon as Jobling was a passably dry man of law, and Mr. F. Lefanu took the part of Adolphus Jobling in a creditable manner. Miss May Mellon made much of the part of Hardacre's daughter Esther; her scenes with the old miser in the second act were capitalty played. Miss Florence Dexter, as Mary the servant, made the most of her small part, but looked much too prim and smart for such a household. The comedietta, "Cup of Tea," preceded the above; and the entertainment closed with a "new and original" farce, by Charles Wotherspoon, entitled, "Another Mistake," which is funny, and rather cleverly put together. The two minor pieces were supported by Misses Helen Langdale and Florence Dexter, and Messrs. Charles Wotherspoon, C. Braby, and L. Berlyn. The whole performance showed the management of the Club to be in very able hands. A band, composed of members of the Orpheonic Amateur Orchestra, under M. Charles Schœnmehl, gave selections during the evening.

The "Italian" Amateur Company gave their fourth annual performance on behalf of the London Homœopathic Hospital, at St. George's Hall, on Thursday evening, January 18. F. W. Broughton's comedietta, "Withered Leaves," formed the first part of the programme; Miss Lucy Roche taking the part of Lady Conyers with finish and confidence. Miss Ivan Bristow was a pretty and effective May Rivers; Mr. Bernard Partridge a very good Sir Conyers Conyers; Mr. C. H. Lamb's Tom Conyers was a natural piece of acting; Mr. Harry Longhurst a cool and collected Arthur Middleton; and Mr. Frankish, as Cecil Vane, made a very proper villain. The piece was well played throughout, running evenly and well, the lines being rendered smartly. The second part consisted of H. J. Byron's "Old Soldiers," substituted for the "Ladies' Battle," owing to the indisposition of a member of the company who was cast for one of the principal parts. Mrs. Conyers-d'Arcy acted with nerve and energy as Kate McTavish; Miss Lucy Roche, as the prim widow, Mrs. Major Moss, was very fair, and Miss Ivan Bristow was an excellent Mary Moss. Captain Conyers-d'Arcy's Lionel Leveret was a clever performance, his assumption of the "not such a fool as he looks" style being very good. Mr. Douglas Fourdrinier, as Cassidy, was undoubtedly the success of the evening. His portrayal of the Irish soldier-servant was a piece of acting seldom attained by amateurs. In the third act, where he befools the scamp McTavish into the belief that his master (Leveret) was in pecuniary embarrassment, was a really fine piece of low comedy. Mr. W. Harwood, as the artless, scheming Captain McTavish, was good; Mr. C. H. Lamb was a well-finished Gordon Lockhart; Mr. Harry Longhurst a capitally made-up and gentlemanly-looking Major Fang; and Mr. Walker assumed the minor part of Mr. Mawker. The comedy was wonderfully perfect all through, not a hitch occurring, capital time being observed to the end, and the members of the com-

pany are to be congratulated upon having such an excellent stage-manager as Captain Conyers-d'Arcy. An amateur band, under the leadership of Mr. A. Dean, did good service in their department. It was announced by the Hon. Secretary (M. A. E. Chambre) that the result of the entertainment would be an addition to the funds of the charity mentioned to the extent of £100.

The old County Town of Sussex, Lewes, again was honoured by a visit from Sir Charles Young, Lady Monckton, Mr. Quintin Twiss, and their circle of friends, who, were kind enough to give performances on two successive nights, the 11th and 12th December. Despite the inclement state of the weather, on Monday especially, when the roads in one portion of the district, that of Newhaven, were impassable, good, though not crowded houses attended. The pieces selected were "A Black Sheep," for the first evening's entertainment. Though admirably acted by all the characters, the play is, at best, one that but little commands the sympathies and attention of the audience. There is a sense of weariness throughout, even though the long first act was divided into two portions, producing, we think, a much better effect. Mr. Mark Keogh was capital as the vulgar American Deane. Sir Charles Young, and Lady Monckton, too, did all that could be done with Stewart and Mrs. Routh respectively. Mr. Quintin Twiss, more especially in the last scene, won throughout the applause of the audience. On Tuesday "A Sheep in Wolf's Clothing" was given. Almost immediately, the audience knew, as if by intuition, an excellent performance was in store for them. The acting all round was capital. Sir Charles Young, Lady Monckton, Mr. Twiss, Miss Frederica Chatterton, and Mr. Fulton (Colonel Kirke), played with force and good taste. Every point was well appreciated by the audience. Last, though not least, apart from size, was the admirable acting of Miss Blanche Hindel, aged six, as Sibyl, who has recently taken a prominent part in the Children's Pantomime at the "Avenue." This child as Nana in "Drink," proved her capabilities—as Sibyl she has confirmed them—a worthy descendant of her father, whom we recognize as a leading actor at the Adelphi. "To oblige Benson" followed a most amusing Comedietta, when again all the characters were seen at their best, more especially Mr. Twiss and Lady Monckton. Mr. Norman each night played wonderfully well, and so did Miss Ethel Stope (Mrs. Norman) whom we hope to see many times again. The Lewes Dramatic Club, especially Mr. Wright, an excellent comedian, gave valuable assistance each night. Mr. Pilbeam, of Mrs. Nye Chart's theatre at Brighton, provided one of the prettiest interiors we ever saw for the "Sheep in Wolf's Clothing."

Mr. John L. Child, late of the Lyceum Theatre, gave his third recital at St. George's Hall, on December 14th last. The first part of the programme consisted of selections from Shakespeare, and commenced with the Trial Scene from "The Merchant of Venice," followed by Clarence's

Dream, from "Richard the Third," and of the Graveyard Scene from "Hamlet." In the latter Mr. Child was particularly good, bringing out the dry utterances of the grave-digger with great point and effect. This portion of the entertainment was brought to a close by the recital of the poem, "The Midnight Charge," written to commemorate the brilliant cavalry charge in the late Egyptian war. Before beginning this recitation Mr. Child, who had very thoughtfully invited the non-commissioned officers and men of the Life Guards from Knightsbridge, found occasion to remark on the paucity of the numbers of the soldiers present, but this did not deter the reciter from acquitting himself in a very excellent manner. The second part included "The Burial March of Dundee," "The Glove and the Lions," "The Raven," and Chapter XIX. from Pickwick, "A Pleasant Day with an Unpleasant Termination." These were all given with Mr. Child's usual good taste and power, showing him to be an elocutionist of the first rank. Perhaps his most successful effort was in "The Glove and the Lions;" the concluding sentences of this little gem being received with hearty applause. Mr. Child is to be congratulated on the happy selection of his pieces.

"The Strolling Players" opened their eighth season at St. George's Hall on the 20th December to a brilliant and interested audience. The single piece presented was Watts Phillip's three-act drama, "Camilla's Husband." The first scene went somewhat stiffly, probably due to the company being out of practice, but for this the numerous characters more than made amends later on. Mr. Edmund Routledge as Maurice Warner, and Miss Achurch as Lady Camilla Hailstone, were, of course, the central figures of the piece, and by their acting well-merited the position; the former by his careful and well-studied rendering of the part enlisted the sympathy of his audience. Miss Achurch acted with excellent taste and no little feeling, finishing with a grand display of power in the last scene. Mr. Charles H. Lamb (Sir Philip Hailstone) gave a most intelligent representation of the part, Captain R. F. Johnson very properly assumed the character of Major Lumley, Mr. C. Penley's Dogbriar was a good piece of character acting, and Miss Beattie's Sloeberry (a gipsy girl) a pretty and pathetic impersonation. The remaining characters were Messrs. R. de Courcy (Captain Shrimpton), J. W. Hawkesworth (Hyacinth Jonquil), A. Young (Maybush), H. Firth (Chowler), and A. Dick (Servant), Miss Rhoda Rae (Lady Roseville), Miss L. Wilde (Clarida Poyntz), Mrs. Rudolf Blind (Red Judy). These ladies and gentlemen worked well together, especially in the later scenes, and the Society should have every reason to be satisfied with the performance. The musical portion of the entertainment was carried out with success by the Orchestral Society attached to the Club under Mr. Norfolk Megone.

Professor Harold Ford, a public reciter of some merit and with a great provincial reputation, appeared at St. James's Hall (New Room) on Wednesday, January 17. His programme included "The Merchant of Venice,"

portion of the trial scene; Byron's "Eve of Waterloo;" a couple of scenes from "Hamlet;" Tennyson's "May Queen;" and a humorous sketch entitled "The Ladies' Congress." There can be no question as to Mr. Ford's power as an elocutionist, and his capabilities were exactly suited to the programme. His ability to give distinct individuality to each particular character was most marked in the Shakesperean selections. Vocal and facial changes were made in a most artistic style, interpreting the scenes with vivid clearness. The recitations were relieved with songs by Mdlle. E. Masset, and Mr. H. Delma, and pianoforte solos by Miss Albino, the first-mentioned lady being also credited with a capital violin solo.

The first dramatic performance of the Paulatim Club was given at St. George's Hall on Saturday, 30th December last. The pieces presented were—H. J. Byron's "Partners for Life," and Tom Taylor's drama, "A Sheep in Wolf's Clothing." In the comedy, Mr. J. H. Saffery, as Horace Mervyn, rendered his lines with effect, but scarcely looked the elderly country gentleman; Mr. C. H. Coffin made a first-rate Tom Gilroy; Mr. C. C. Homan, as Muggles, kept the audience in a continual state of merriment, making his funny speeches in the most natural manner; Mr. J. G. Slee, as the headstrong young gentleman Ernest, looked and acted the part to perfection; Messrs. S. Meyer and C. Dunn, as Sir A. Drelincourt and Major Billiter respectively, did very well, and Mr. A. C. E. Hill filled the minor part of Goppinger. Miss Ivan Bristow was a charmingly graceful Emily Mervyn; Miss A. Catherwood, as Fanny Smith, was not quite equal to the part—a little more animation would have made a great improvement; Mrs. H. Leigh's Miss Priscilla was a clever performance, highly creditable to the lady; and Miss L. Graves took the small part of the maid, Darbyshire. The piece was fairly well played all through, though a little more life and spirit was wanted to make its success complete. In Tom Taylor's little drama, which, by the way, preceded the above, Mr. A. T. Frankish (the stage manager) represented Colonel Kirke with boldness and force, aided not a little by a capital make-up; Mr. J. M. Powell's rendering of Jasper Carew was very fine, as was also Mr. H. S. Millward's the thick-headed but good-hearted yokel, Kester Chedzoy; Mr. H. W. Cooke, jun., as Colonel Lord Churchill, had little to do, but there was not much of the soldier in his voice, nor did he assume a very military air; Messrs. C. C. Homan and L. L. Preston took the remaining male parts of Corporal Flintoff and John Zoyland. Miss Florence Worth, as Anne Carew, was, of course, the centre of interest, and she well understood the part, her scenes with Colonel Kirke and her husband being genuine pieces of acting. Mrs. Howard, excellently made-up, was Dame Carew; Mrs. Viveash, Keziah Mapletoft; and a charming little lady, Miss Florence May, prettily represented Sibyl, the child of the Carews. As a whole, a very good evening's entertainment was given, the different performers being generally well up to their parts, but, as I before remarked, there was not enough life and go displayed. The West London Orchestral Society supplied the band, which gave a well-selected programme, which was equally well carried out.

Under the auspices of Mr. Edwin Drew, a benefit entertainment, on behalf of the Alhambra employés, London Firemen Fund and the widow Berg, was given in the Banqueting Hall, St. James's Hall, on Tuesday, 16th January last. The programme was of the miscellaneous kind, and comprised recitations by Messrs. E. Drew, R. Garnier, J. Ward, J. C. Trinder, Acklow, J. E. Bridges and Græme, and Miss Barton; songs by Madlle. E. Masset, and Misses Norah Hayes, M. Gwynne, A. Kean, and Madame Aubrey. Scenes were given by Mrs. Stewart and Mr. F. Bush (Helen and Modus); by Miss Lilian Hervey and Miss E. Lennox (Julia and Clifford), from the "Hunchback;" and by Miss Caldwell and Mr. E. Drew (Lady and Sir Peter Teazle). Herr Lehmeyer presided at the piano, and gave a couple of solos in very good style. One of the best recitations was that of Miss Barton, who gave Wolsey's speech to Cromwell in a most effective manner. Mr. Drew's effort in the "Charge of the Light Brigade" was also well received, and appearing again in conjunction with Miss Caldwell in a couple of scenes from the "School for Scandal," in character, he met with a hearty recall. The various other performers acquitted themselves with more or less merit, space not permitting me to notice them in detail. Altogether, the entertainment was a success, and must have added considerably to the funds for which it was given.

In the past month Master John Colbourne Trinder has been continuing his clever Recitals from Shakspeare, at St. James's Hall. His remarkable memory, coupled with his extreme youth, show him to be an artist of no mean order, and we shall no doubt hear of him as a public entertainer for many years to come. In his recital of the 8th January, he gave five scenes, or parts of scenes, from "Othello," and so correct was his memory, that not once did he pause or even hesitate for a word. Of course, there are important things besides accurate memory to be looked for in a good recitation, and there is some room for improvement in action, gesture, &c., but these slight imperfections will vanish by practice and experience. The recitations were relieved by a miscellaneous programme of vocal and instrumental music, successfully carried out by Messrs. Lehmeyer, Sumpter, A. Hervey, W. Dailby, and Konigsberg; Madame Aubrey, and Misses A. Giles and Hayes. Mr. Edwin Drew, under whose management the recitals were conducted, also gave a couple of humorous readings written by himself, entitled "Dishing the Dentist" and "The False Pedestrian," which were very favourably received.

Mr. Chillingham Hunt, after a couple of years' successful work as a public reciter in the provinces, appeared before a London audience on Thursday evening, 11th January, at St. James's Hall. Mr. Hunt's great powers were well displayed in the following programme:—"Hamlet," scene iv. act 3, and scene i. act 5; "Romeo and Juliet," scenes i. ii. and iii. act 5; "School for Scandal," screen scene; "Lady of Lyons," garden and cottage scene, &c. With such a list, the performer's elocutionary and

histrionic talents were fully extended, and Mr. Hunt proved himself quite equal to the task. Gifted with a powerful yet flexible voice, his faculty of individualizing the several characters was particularly marked, and the pieces selected were certainly calculated to test this power to the utmost. Each item was attentively received by an enthusiastic audience, who freely applauded.

Most appropriately, the first session of the Dramatic School of Art was brought to a close by a Speech Day on the 21st of December. This is a time-honoured custom, and it carries us back to our own school-days, when recitations by selected pupils were given; when, nervously, the reciter made his bow before a friendly audience; when he "strutted and fretted"—a good deal of both—his brief time upon the temporary platform; and when applause followed his maiden effort. It is a true maxim that "there is nothing new under the sun;" this Speech Day was a reflex of a bygone time.

In the very pretty theatre attached to the school, with a good stage, replete with all means and appliances, to boot, the pupils of the different classes came before a select and critical audience. First in the programme were the students of the Rev. A. F. D'Orsey's class, who relied chiefly upon Shakspeare. Especially noteworthy was the rendering of Clarence's "Dream," by Mr. Joseph Ashman, who gave the recital with much dramatic force, showing that he belonged to the powerful and energetic school of declamation. Mr. Frank Evans gave "Cassius instigating Brutus." This was a very fair example of good level speaking, gradually warming up into passion. Mr. Capel Haynes is an actor, or should be one. He made an immense hit by his assumption of the character of Sergeant Buzfuz; not only was his change of voice admirable, but the "business" was replete with the most minute detail. "A palpable hit" was made, everybody was delighted, and certainly taken by surprise. Mr. Capel Haynes may be studying for the Bar; if so, he will make his mark in the arena of the New Law Courts, but it is a pity the Stage should not secure him.

Mrs. Chippendale's class came next. The young lady pupils did their instructress credit. Miss Bessie Hatton the pretty daughter of genial Joseph Hatton, the well-known writer and journalist, gave the well-known speech on "Mercy," from the "Merchant of Venice." There was marked intelligence in the delivery of the lines; added to this there was a charming purity of voice, which won quickly on the ear. Miss Hatton is very young—in fact, the youngest of all the pupils—but she is full of promise, which only requires application, and the judicious training of her coach, to arrive at some satisfactory result. Miss Johnson recited "The Seven Ages;" but why this was selected in preference to other speeches more suitable to a lady speaker puzzles us.

Mr. George Neville's evening class followed. Of his three pupils, Mr. A. H. Payne bore away the palm. He selected "The Collier's Dying Child." Not only was there great tenderness in the voice, but there was facial expression also. Mr. A. H. Payne will no doubt take, as he fully deserves, a first-class certificate for elocution; then he will move on to the next branch of his education. Should he develop the same aptitude for

acting, he will be worth looking after. In the recital of "The Charge of the Light Brigade," Mr. Ernest Paxon began in too high a key. He was carried away, as it were, beyond his own control, and awoke the very echoes of the hall. Doubtless he will be toned down in the future; it is easier to do this than to produce fire where there is no possibility of righting it.

Miss Carlotta Leclercq's class. Miss Marguerite Etoile gave a soliloquy from "Hamlet." The reading was correct, and the ring of the verse carefully measured. Mrs. Bennett and Miss Thrale selected speeches from "The Hunchback." Miss St. Albyn recited "The Gambler's Wife." There was much dramatic intention in this, but it failed in its effect by reason of a fatal fault—that of drawing the breath with an audible gasp at frequent intervals. There was humour in Miss N. St. Albyn's "Cheap Dinner," giving the idea that the young lady is qualifying for comic characters.

To close the programme, and evidently to leave a good impression, there was an entire scene from Schiller's "Mary Stuart." Miss Gladys Homfrey as Queen Elizabeth, and Miss Bell as Mary Stuart, were both excellent. The duel of words was well fought; both ladies won much applause. Miss Marguerite Etoile, as the waiting-maid, filled in the background with very good effect; her bye-play was to the purpose, yet not obtrusive.

This first Speech Day augured well for the future of the Dramatic School of Art. It was evident, by the attention of the audence, that there was considerable interest in the proceedings of the afternoon. Let but the committee, professors, and pupils all work in perfect harmony, bearing in mind Richelieu's line to François, "There's no such word as fail," and the motto for the new school may be written in golden letters thus—*Finis coronat opus.*

"Caste" looks the most promising revival of any Robertsonian play yet attempted at the Haymarket. With a stronger backbone than any other of the series, and, on the whole, very excellently cast, it suits the theatre almost as well as it did that of the little Prince of Wales, now under sentence of condemnation. Those who have a sixteen years' memory, fresh and unimpaired, will like to contrast some of the old acting with the present, not always disadvantageously to the new comers; whereas, such as see "Caste" for the first time will probably regard all this as affectation, and consider nothing could possibly be better than the present company. In the Polly Eccles of Mrs. Bancroft, and the Captain Hawtree of Mr. Bancroft, no improvement could possibly be made. It is not because they played them originally that I say so, but because in the whole Robertsonian series neither ever did anything so well. Mr. Robertson wrote his plays on the tailor principle. He fitted his company as he wrote. He had them all in his mind's eye directly after "Society" made such an unexpected success. The parts did not fall to the artists—they were made for them. Mr. Robertson was quick to detect manner and idiosyncrasy, so Mrs. Bancroft became Polly Eccles of Little Stangate, Mr. Bancroft was

Hawtree, Mr. Hare Sam Gerridge, and Mr. F. Younge George d'Alroy. I should feel inclined to sum up the revival as follows :—Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft are, if anything, better than ever. Eccles, even by Mr. George Honey, was not played so well, so artistically, or with such moderation as by Mr. David James ; and Mrs. Stirling, as the Marquise, is a revelation. The part has never been read as Mrs. Stirling reads it—never attacked with such taste and refinement. Mrs. Stirling upset all calculations, and gave us as fine a bit of refined comedy as anyone would desire to see. So far all was well. Mr. Brookfield played Sam Gerridge very cleverly, even if he disappointed the veteran division. He delighted the members of the A.D.C., who are proud of his success. But I wonder where Mr. Brookfield unearthed that phrase, "He blewed it"? I am sure it is not in the text of "Caste," and it should never have been introduced at all. Miss Gerard feels strongly, and gave a very intelligent and highly emotional rendering of Esther Eccles, that lifted the play as it went on. She never let the story down for an instant, and it only required a George d'Alroy of more prominent sentiment to sustain the pathetic moments of the play. But I can never hope to see a D'Alroy like the original representative, Frederick Younge. This was a performance to be remembered. Still, we cannot have everything, and those who cannot enjoy "Caste" as acted at the Haymarket must be very hard to please. Playgoers are in luck this year, for I never remember such a succession of clever and well-acted plays. What with Shakspeare at the Lyceum and the Strand, first-class comedy at the St. James's and the Court, and the best of all the Robertson plays at the Haymarket, it is literally an *embarras de richesses*.

It may not be generally known that the original sketch of the story that subsequently became the play of "Caste," appeared in a Christmas volume called "Rates and Taxes," edited by Tom Hood, and contributed to by Robertson, Prowse, W. S. Gilbert, Clement Scott, and Thomas Archer. There is a passage in that same story well worth quoting ; it has all the Thackeray flavour in it, and always reminds me of a scene in Vanity Fair.

"It was a terrible parting. Esther bore it as meekly as she could, but there are bounds to the endurance even of women ; and Fairfax Daubray had to go upon his knees and implore her to keep calm for the sake of the little one not yet of this world. The bugles rang out and the drums rolled, as Ensign Daubray took his place with his company ; and as he marched past the Queen his heart thumped, and he felt every inch a soldier. At the same moment his wife was lying insensible with her three pale sisters hovering round her.

"Fairfax Daubray was a brave, stupid, good-natured young man, and adored by the men under his command. A finer hearted gentleman or a more incapable officer never buckled on a sword belt. He fought gallantly at the Alma, and wrote after the battle. His wife, who was again at the little house at Stangate, read parts of his letters to her sisters, who cheered and wept and hurrahed as she read. She took them all with her to church upon the following Sunday. It was in a hot skirmish that Ensign Daubray found himself in command of his company. His captain had been shot, and the lieutenant borne wounded to the rear. He saw the enemy above him. He knew that it was a soldier's duty to fight, and he led on his men up the hill side.

"'Dib ! Dib ! come back !' shouted two or three old officers from the main body of the troops behind him. Daubray turned round to them.

"'*Come back be damned!*' answered he, waving his sword above his head, '*You fellows come on!*'

"The next moment he fell, pierced by three Russian bullets. The soldiers saw him fall, cheered and rushed on. The Russians were in strong force, the odds, numerically, were six to one, but the English Regiment cleared the hill side!"

Sir George Dexter, K.C.B.—he never called himself, until very recently, Sir George Dexter, Bart., on the playbills—has a right to explain himself as to his bearing on the new play "Comrades," at the Court Theatre.

"I did not like to say a word till all criticisms were out, as a fault so generally found with 'Comrades' must be a serious one, and the fault lies only partially on the authors. The explanation of Sir George's conduct in 'Comrades' is given in a scene between the army doctor and myself, and people didn't pay much attention to the talk of two old men, not knowing how very important it is to hear it accurately. I did not like to speak about this till all was over, as one must be judged by the effect produced on the mind of the audience at night. I distinctly tell the doctor more than once that I am a baronet; 'that I inherit the title from my uncle,' and that my estates are entailed. The story of my position I tell to him, and my position as written is this:—Sir George is heir to a baronetcy of entailed estates; he finds them heavily encumbered; his uncle the baronet is on the way of bankruptcy. He is married unknown to his people; they wish him to marry a very rich heiress. A telegram reaches him that his wife is dead. 'The heiress marries him for the title; he, her, for the money.' The heiress's money is employed in clearing the estates. He is a very weak man, and don't speak at once. He has used the money he married the heiress for. He can't complete his bargain by giving to any child by her the title she married him for. For ten years they have no child. During that time he has brought up Darleigh as a gentleman, put him in the army, given him plenty of money and so on, and 'thought he could put all right for Darleigh at his death.' Then Arthur was born. By that time he was devoted to his wife, she to him, and he hadn't the pluck to tell her. He was selfish and weak. No sympathy is asked for him, he is really the villain of the play, and I do really think there are thousands of men equally weak."

Now that Sir George Dexter has had his say, let me have mine. The whole confusion arose from not printing on the programme the full title of Sir George Dexter, Bart., K.C.B. I distinctly deny that first-night audiences do not listen accurately "to the talk of two old men." They listen to every syllable of the play most carefully; but had they heard Sir George Dexter describe himself as a baronet twenty times they would have doubted their ears when they found on the playbill he was *not* a baronet, but only a K.C.B.

THE THEATRE.

March, 1883.

The Foyers of the Boulevard.

By Charles Hervey.

THE Parisian Theatres specially devoted to drama and melodrama at the period from which my recollections date, not including the Cirque, with its military spectacles and that ultima Thule, the Beaumarchais, exclusively patronized by the denizens of the Marais, were four in number—namely, the Porte St. Martin, the Ambigu, the Gaîté, and the Théâtre Historique. Of these, the Ambigu alone remains unchanged ; the Porte St. Martin having been destroyed by fire and rebuilt, the Gaîté transported to the Square des Arts et Métiers, and the Théâtre Historique demolished altogether. At the time of which I speak, however, before M. Hausmann had conceived even the least audacious of his reformatory projects, the Boulevard du Temple with its eight theatres, large and small, adjoining each other, and its miscellaneous crowd of idlers, fruit sellers, and cocoa purveyors, presented from five P.M. till long past midnight a very different aspect from its comparatively deserted appearance in the year of grace 1883. One of these days, perhaps, I may venture on a gossip about the minor Thespian colonies of this once popular locality, but "qui trop embrasse mal étreint ;" and in limiting myself for the nonce to a brief review of the four leading establishments already mentioned, I have work enough cut out for me to exhaust the patience of even the most sympathetically indulgent reader.

Any one commissioned to describe the foyers of the theatres in question, as they existed five-and-thirty years ago, would have had an easy task before him ; for, except as regards size, there was

little material difference observable between them. They were all constructed more or less on the same model, and scantily furnished with the ordinary green-room requisites—viz., a clock, a mirror in a gilt frame, and the inevitable supply of stuff-covered benches ranged against the walls ; that of the Porte St. Martin was the largest and, if possible, the dingiest, whereas the sanctum devoted to the artists of the newly opened Théâtre Historique, to which I was first introduced by Madame Rey, the very charming representative of Madame de Nevers in "la Reine Margot," although of moderate dimensions, had at least the merit of being "fraîchement décoré." None of them, however, were sufficiently attractive to tempt me to more than an occasional visit, and I merely allude to them by way of justifying what has become to me a familiar and comprehensive title.

I had the chance in 1844 of witnessing one of the last performances of the dramatized version of Eugene Sue's "Mystères de Paris" at the Porte St. Martin, then under the management of M. Théodore Cogniard ; and shall never forget the impression produced on me by Frédérick Lemaître as Jacques Ferrand. The piece itself was simply a succession of ill-connected "tableaux" strung together without much apparent reference to each other, and the utter disregard of unities and artistic "dovetailedness" would have been a deathblow to Mr. Curdle ; but whenever Frédérick was on the stage, these incongruities were more than counterbalanced by the intense power of his acting. I have since had ample opportunity of appreciating the versatile talent of this extraordinary man, having seen him in almost every character of his varied repertory, including such Protean transformations from grave to gay as "la Dame de St. Tropez," "le Barbier du roi d'Aragon," "Kean," "César de Bazan," "Ruy Blas," "Robert Macaire," "Toussaint l'Ouverture," and above all, what I have ever considered his masterpiece, "Trente ans, ou la vie d'un joueur." Nothing since the Othello of Edmund Kean has taken so strong a hold on my memory as the despairing expression of his face in the last act of Victor Ducange's drama ; when, breaking off part of the loaf grudgingly bestowed on him by the innkeeper, he glanced stealthily round to see if any one was watching him, and hid it beneath his vest, faintly whispering "pour ma famille !" So heartrending was his

look of misery, and so irresistibly pathetic his accentuation of the words, that the effect was indescribable, and I can scarcely recall it without an involuntary shudder. Off the stage, he was somewhat Bohemian in his habits, and by no means disinclined, when an occasion presented itself, to play the part of boon companion; he could be sad or uproariously jovial, as the fancy took him; and I remember his gravely asking the clever draughtsman Lacauchie in my presence if in the fifth act of Lamartine's "Toussaint l'Ouverture" he should make him laugh or cry. He was certainly capable of doing either.

What Madame Dorval may have been in her prime, when she played Adèle d'Hervey to Bocage's Antony, I can only gather from hearsay, nor was I in time to witness her triumph at the Théâtre Français as Kitty Bell in "Chatterton" and Catarina in Victor Hugo's "Angelo;" but if I may be allowed to judge of her excellence in these characters from my own recollections of her in "Trente Ans" and "Marie Jeanne," she must have been, in her own particular line, one of the most remarkable artists that ever trod the stage. I could not, however, discover either in her tone or manner any trace of that refinement which has ever been a traditional "sine quâ non" at the Comédie Française, and am not surprised that her stay there was of short duration; but as an actress of popular drama, impulsive and energetic even to coarseness, now electrifying her audience by a sudden burst of passion, now melting them to tears by a touch of the homeliest pathos, I never saw her equal.

In addition to these two brilliant luminaries, the Porte St. Martin then possessed three actors of undoubted merit, Raucourt, Clarence and Jemma, each of whom has left his mark in the annals of the theatre; the first as the Maître d'École in "Les Mystères de Paris," the second (who afterwards won golden opinions at the Odéon in George Sand's "François le Champi,") as Rochegune in "Mathilde," and the third as Caussade in "La Dame de St. Tropez." Nor were the fair sex less ably represented by Mdlle. Clarisse Miroy, twenty years earlier the original Marie in "La Grace de Dieu," but as I remember her a matronly lady weighing some sixteen stone, and nevertheless holding her own against Frédérick as Maritana in "Don César de Bazan;" the pretty Mdlle. Andréa, Mdlle. Dina Félix, a fairly successful copy in look and gesture of her sister Rachel, and Mdlle. Grave, who, like Miss

Vincent of Victorian celebrity, from her invariably personating distressed and persecuted damsels with praiseworthy resignation, might appropriately have been denominated the "acknowledged heroine of domestic drama."

Besides the class of pieces already mentioned, this theatre excelled in the production of "revues" and "féeries," no better specimen of the former speciality having ever seen the light than "Aujourd'hui et dans cent ans," in which Nestor, a most valuable member of the company, and by no means so venerable as his name would seem to imply, was exquisitely droll. The revival of the "Petites Danaïdes" afforded him another opportunity of distinguishing himself; he remembered Potier in the part of the Père Sournois, and imitated his dress, voice, and gestures with such surprising fidelity that old playgoers fancied themselves carried back to the days of their youth, and could hardly realize that they were applauding a copy instead of the great original. The trump card of the management, however, was that most splendid of all spectacles, "la Biche au Bois," the run of which was prodigious, and equally profitable to the treasurer and to the two rival restaurants of the vicinity, Deffieux's and the Banquet d'Anacréon, the former renowned for its white curaçoa, and the latter for its staple dish of breast of mutton fried with breadcrumbs, and served up with a sauce the recipe for which the *chef* was believed exclusively to possess. Fairy pieces, especially French ones, are not, as a rule, the liveliest of entertainments; and when a man has undergone the penance of occupying a narrow stall from seven P.M. to one A.M., and of listening to a succession of dialogues of which he can make neither head nor tail, he is apt, as Mr. Burnand has it, to feel "a bit chippy" next day. Judged from a literary point of view, the "féerie" of the brothers Cogniard was fully as tedious as the generality of its kind; but as a marvel of scenic decoration—and I would particularly instance the "Forest of Sycamores" and the "Castle of Steel"—it has never, within my recollection, been surpassed.

Little by little, the old actors, including Moessard, who had played the virtuous and heavy fathers for nearly half a century, disappeared, and made way for fresh candidates for popularity; any temporary decline of the receipts being at once remedied by a revival of the "Tour de Nesle," almost as safe a stock-piece as the "Mémoires du Diable" at the Vaudeville. Fechter appeared

and conquered in "Claudie" and "le Fils de la Nuit;" Mélingue (of whom I have sufficiently spoken elsewhere) moulded a statue in "Benvenuto Cellini," and dashed off a sketch in "Salvator Rosa;" Ligier deserted the Théâtre Français to rant for ten louis a night in Victor Séjour's "Richard the Third;" and Mdlle. Georges, enfeebled by age and infirmities, struggled painfully through a few performances of "la Chambre Ardente." None of these, however, met with such signal success as the "Jack Sheppard" of Harrison Ainsworth, metamorphosed into "les Chevaliers du Brouillard," the hero of which was, and still is, occasionally personated by that very clever actress, Madame Marie Laurent. Wishing to know my old friend's opinion as to the relative merits of this talented lady and of our own admirable Mrs. Keeley, I wrote to him on the subject a year or two before his death, and subjoin his answer, in which, I need hardly add, I most heartily and entirely coincide. "In reply to your inquiry, I can say without a moment's hesitation that, as a whole, I preferred Mrs. Keeley's 'Jack Sheppard' to that of Madame Marie Laurent; though there were particular points in which the admirable French actress far excelled the other. But both pleased me so much that I scarcely like to institute a comparison between them. Madame Marie Laurent's was undoubtedly a more vigorous conception of the part, but I cannot give the palm to her."

From the Porte St. Martin to the Ambigu was merely a stone's-throw, and I could not have timed my first visit to the latter more propitiously than I did; for the "Bohémiens de Paris" was in full swing, an essentially popular drama, which, in the eyes of the frequenters of the theatre, possessed every element of success. In the first place, Chilly was the "traître," and as such nightly overwhelmed with execrations from the "titis" in the gallery; and, secondly, the very catching "ronde" beginning "Fouler le bitume" was composed by the leader of the orchestra Artus, and sung by Adalbert. No piece in those days was considered complete without this last indispensable requisite, M. Artus having a certain flow of melody highly appreciated by the "gods," and Adalbert being—they alone knew why, for he had the thinnest of tenor voices and a very hazy conception of the art of acting—their idol. Chilly, or M. de Chilly, as he was afterwards designated when manager of the Odéon, must not be so summarily dismissed, for a more intelligent and thoroughly con-

scientious artist has rarely been seen in a Boulevard theatre; with the single exception of the Senator Bird (*Gallicé* "Beard") in a version of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," the characters assigned him were almost invariably those of the stereotype stage villains, in which, without the slightest tendency to exaggeration or rant, he was wonderfully effective. I remember his telling me that on the first night of "les Mousquetaires," his performance of Mordaunt had so worked upon the feelings of the impressionable gallery, that his exit at the stage door was impatiently awaited by a menacing crowd, loudly proclaiming their intention of "doing for" him, so that he had literally to fly for his life. Other excellent members of the company were St. Ernest, one of the best "pères nobles" I ever saw; Montdidier from the Gymnase, whose broad, dashing style of acting exactly suited the requirements of the theatre; Matis, who had the amiable weakness of exhibiting his portrait lithographed by himself in every print-seller's window; and that racy child of Momus, Laurent, than whom no droller "comique" could be found from the Madeleine to the Bastille. Among the ladies two stood out pre-eminent, Madame Guyon and Madame Naptal-Arnault; the former, who died sociétaire of the Comédie Française, was the Eliza of "la Case de l'Oncle Tom," and on her first entrance presented so picturesque an appearance and looked so splendidly handsome that the audience rose *en masse*, and applauded her until their fingers ached before she had time to utter a word. Madame Naptal-Arnault (whose husband, by the way, proved a sorry substitute for Mélingue as Monte Cristo), was not only a very pretty woman, but a delightfully sympathetic actress, and by many degrees the most ladylike "jeune première" on the Boulevard boards: her creation of a Breton peasant girl in Frédéric Soulié's last and best drama, "la Closerie des Génets," still lingers in my memory as a type of simple and unaffected grace. The manager of the Ambigu was then M. Antony Béraud, whose ready pen supplied at least half the pieces of the repertory; in a letter addressed to me in 1846, referring to my recently published "Theatres of Paris," he mentions, among others, "le Monstre," an adaptation from Frankenstein, for which T. P. Cooke was specially engaged, "Faust" (one of Frédérick Lemaître's triumphs), and a legendary drama, at the first performance of which I was present, called the "Miracle des Roses."

If I recollect rightly, my "début" as one of the Gaîté audience took place during the long run of the "Canal St. Martin,' a genuine local drama, full of startling situations and effects, the leading personages in which were sustained by Surville, a painstaking and sterling artist; Delaistre, the "traître" of the company, gifted with a cavernous bass voice, who rolled his r's after the fashion of Beauvallet of the Théâtre Francais; and Mdlle. Sarah Félix, Rachel's elder sister; this lady, whose dramatic capabilities were not of the highest order, wisely retired from the stage some years later, and devoted her energies to the composition of an "infallible" specific for the embellishment of the hair. A far cleverer actor was Madame Abit, to whose exertions the authors of "Madeleine" and "la Sœur du Muletier" were indebted for a very notable augmentation of their "droits;" pathetic parts were her forte, but she now and then, unhappily, betrayed a leaning towards exaggeration, which was the more to be regretted, as, in other respects, her delivery was irreproachable. On my venturing to hint as much to my neighbour in the stalls, where we were cooped up like herrings in a cask, "Monsieur," he replied, with a significant shrug, and to this day I do not know whether he meant to perpetuate a pun or not, "C'est son *habit*ude!" Gouget, then a young beginner, has since made his mark, and the energetic Deshayes has left a worthy successor in his son Paul; but the mainstay of the theatre, according to public estimation, was Albert, the original representative of Eugene Sue's "Atar Gall;" of all the insupportable ranters I ever had the misfortune of hearing, not even excepting "Brayvo Hicks" of transpontine renown, he was the very worst; Ligier, in "Richard the Third," was bad enough in all conscience, but he could not hold a candle to his colleague at the Gaîté. Such as he was, however, his name in the bills had a magical influence on the receipts, which, from a managerial point of view, is assuredly the most satisfactory criterion of popularity.

A very great favourite with the masses was Mdlle. Léontine, familiarly called "Chonchon," from her exclusive appropriation of that character in "La Grâce de Dieu;" she was short and squat in figure, with staring lack-lustre eyes and a squeaking voice, but her cool, take-it-easy style of acting was highly relished, and no novelty in the shape of a fairy piece or spectacle had the remotest chance of success without her co-operation. She was then engaged

in the Herculean task of enlivening the pointless dialogue of that ineffably tedious production "Les Sept Châteaux du Diable," together with Serres, formerly the Bertrand of "L'Auberge des Adrêts," but, when I saw him, on his last legs, and Francisque "Jeune," who, having borne this distinctive title during the lifetime of his elder brother, retained it until his death. Apropos of this amusing actor and indefatigable bibliomaniac, the following anecdote, if not new, may be relied on as authentic; for I had it from his own lips. He was starring in a small country town, and, having to perform in the course of the evening the part of a chasseur, charged the waiter of the inn where he lodged, a stage-struck Jocrisse, who acted for the nonce as his dresser, to let him know when the first piece was over, as he must dress quickly, having to put on a pair of gaiters very difficult to button; and this done, sat quietly down to dinner. By-and-by his messenger returned with a very self-satisfied air.

"Is the first piece finished?" inquired Francisque.

"They are beginning the overture of the second," cheerfully replied the waiter, "but you needn't hurry, for *I have buttoned your gaiters from top to bottom!*"

A popular stock-piece at this theatre for many years was the "Courrier de Lyon," known in England as the "Lyons Mail," Lacressonnière personating Lesurques and Dubosq, and Paulin Ménier the horse-dealer, Choppard. The first-named, an accomplished comedian, had already made a hit at the Ambigu by his really fine performance of Charles the First in "Les Mousquetaires," and subsequently migrated to the Théâtre Historique. As for Paulin Ménier, he was one of those fantastic sons of Thespis who excel in the creation of an episodical part, but are unequal to the task of sustaining a leading character; his Choppard, a type exactly suited to his peculiar talent, was as perfect a piece of acting as I ever remember seeing. At intervals, in addition to the regular company, a succession of "stars" were engaged for the run of their respective novelties; notably, Laferrière in "Le Médecin des Enfants," Lafont, Madame Doche and the charming "ingénue" Augusta in "Germaine," and Numa in a revival of that most ancient of all fairy spectacles "Le Pied de Mouton," a cant phrase which repeated ad infinitum will serve as an answer to any one desirous of knowing more about the Gaîté than I have space to tell him; "demandez plutôt à Lazarille!"

When Alexandre Dumas first projected the establishment of a theatre, chiefly destined for the production of his own pieces, a series of very droll caricatures by Cham appeared in an illustrated paper, one representing an actor's horror on being informed by the dramatist that he could only be engaged on condition of his imbibing a decoction of arsenic in the poisoning scenes, and another depicting the stupefaction of an old gentleman when shown the analysis of "Monte-Cristo," comprising four ponderous volumes in folio. It was unfortunate both for the originator of the scheme (who had counted on the patronage of the Orleans family) and for the shareholders, that shortly after the opening of the Théâtre Historique, the Revolution of 1848 broke out, and the receipts necessarily dwindled down to nothing; for, although matters ultimately improved, the new venture never entirely recovered the blow. This was the more regrettable, as it possessed every element of success; the company was excellent, the dramas produced were eminently attractive, and the minutest details of scenery, costume and general "getting-up," were as perfect as good taste and liberal expenditure could possibly render them. I have not space to dwell on the picturesque effects of "la Reine Margot" (the opening piece), "le Chevalier de Maison Rouge," "Monte Cristo," "la Jeunesse des Mousquetaires," "Urbain Grandier," and a dozen other specimens of Dumas's versatile genius, my business being mainly with the artists who figured in them; and of these (setting aside the ubiquitous and inevitable Mélingue) no one demands a special mention more than Rouvière. This most unequal of actors, from the commencement to the premature close of his career, was a constant puzzle to the critics, who could never make up their minds how to judge him, and by whom the epithet "journalier" was generally and correctly applied to him. With him from the sublime to the ridiculous was but a step; he was either superlatively excellent or execrable, as the fancy took him; now exciting his audience to enthusiasm, now sinking many degrees below mediocrity. I have seen him play Hamlet (in Dumas's version) admirably, and no better representative of the vacillating Charles the Ninth in "la Reine Margot" could have been desired; as the Abbé Faria in "Monte Cristo," on the contrary, he displayed such utter incompetency, that on the second performance the part was entrusted to another actor. His colleague, Bignon, who married the celebrated Madame

Albert, was altogether of a different stamp: thoroughly reliable and conscientious in all he undertook, he contributed largely to the success of the "Chevalier de Maison Rouge," by his remarkable personation of Dixmer, completely merging his own individuality in that of the character represented by him, and to quote his memorable words, "entrant carrément dans la peau du bonhomme."

With the exception of Mdlle. Lucie, the energetic Femme Tison of "Maison Rouge," and the stately Atala Beauchêne, both old stagers, the principal ladies of the company were mostly new to the Parisian boards, but soon made themselves at home there; these were Madame Perrier from Lyons, afterwards Madame Lacressonnière, expressly engaged for "la Reine Margot," the pretty Mdlle. Maillet, Mdlle. Isabelle Constant, a graceful but rather lachrymose blonde, and Mdlle. Béatrix Person. This very intelligent and highly gifted actress proved a trump card to the management, and more particularly to Dumas himself, who found in her the *rara avis* he had long been in search of: an artist capable of interpreting in an effective and intensely realistic fashion two of his most powerful creations, Milady in "les Mousquetaires," and the terrible Carconte in "Monte Cristo."

I have purposely kept to the last my own especial favourites, Boutin, the inimitable Caderousse, and Colbrun, the representative *par excellence* of the genuine Boulevard "gamin," for the sake of winding up with a little anecdote concerning them. While on my way one evening to dine at Bonvalet's, I observed a crowd assembled at the corner of the Faubourg du Temple, and on approaching nearer, beheld to my astonishment Boutin executing an indescribable fantasia on a cracked violin by way of accompanying Colbrun, who was bellowing at the top of his voice the then popular ronde of "Paris la Nuit." The two performers were surrounded by a throng of appreciative auditors, including a blind man evidently the owner of the instrument, for whose benefit the concert (!) had apparently been organized, and who was listening, rapt in admiration, to—it must be owned—the most atrocious cacophony I ever heard. Presently, after a final ear-splitting explosion, the violin having been restored to its proprietor, the two virtuosoes, hand in hand, proceeded to gather in their harvest; *sous* flowed in rapidly in response to the appeal "Pour l'aveugle s'il vous plait!" and in a very few minutes the grateful recipient,

richer than he had been for many a day, went on his way rejoicing.

"Vingt-trois francs cinquante de recette!" I heard Boutin remark to his diminutive comrade, as they sped away in the direction of the Théâtre Historique; "Mazette! V'là ce que c'est que de travailler pour des connaisseurs!"

"Surtout," drily suggested Colbrun, "lorsqu'ils sont sourds!"

Joe Miller.

By Dutton Cook.

TO most people, Joe Miller is rather a name than a man: the name is famous, while of the man who bore the name so little is known. By a figure of speech, any specially old and effete joke is described as a "Joe Miller," because of a little volume entitled "Joe Miller's Jests, or the Wit's Vade-Mecum," first published, at the price of one shilling, in the year 1739, and popularly supposed to be a perfect encyclopædia of antiquated facetiousness. As a matter of fact, however, the veritable Joe Miller had no connection or acquaintance with "Joe Miller's Jests." The work appeared one year after his death, and owed its existence to a certain John Mottley, a gentleman of good family, whom circumstances had constrained to live precariously by such use as he could make of his wits and his pen. Compiling the Jest Book he assumed the name of Elijah Jenkins, and affected to be a friend of the recently departed Miller. The catalogues of dramatic poets include the name of John Mottley as the author of "The Imperial Captain," a tragedy dealing with the history of Genseric, king of the Vandals, printed in 1720, and performed for four nights at the theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields; and of a comedy called "The Widow Bewitched," successfully presented at the Goodman's Fields Theatre in 1730. In his youth he had been placed in the Excise Office; he resigned his appointment there, however, Lord Halifax having promised him a Commissionership of Wine Licenses; the promise was not kept, nor did Sir Robert

Walpole fulfil certain hopes he had encouraged that he would bestow upon Mottley a place in the Exchequer. "Among several pieces he has given to the public," writes a biographer, "is that which bears the title of 'Joe Miller's Jests,' a collection made by him from other books, and a great part of it supplied by his memory from original stories recollected in his former conversations." Mottley lived to see his Jest Book become a sort of standard work; he died in 1750. The book, it may be added, is described on its title-page as "a collection of the most brilliant jests, the politest repartees, the most elegant bon-mots, and most pleasant short stories in the English language, first carefully collected in the company and many of them transcribed from the mouth of the facetious gentlemen whose name they bear, and now set forth and published by his lamented friend and former companion, Elijah Jenkins, Esq." The work was "most humbly inscribed" to "those choice spirits of the age, Captain Bodens, Mr. Alexander Pope, Mr. Professor Lacy, Mr. Orator Henley, and Job Baker, the Kettle-Drummer." This dedication is, no doubt, to be viewed as a contribution to the drollery of the book.

At Drury Lane, in November, 1709, the character of Teague, in Sir Robert Howard's comedy of "The Committee," was personated, as the playbills stated, "by one who never appeared on the stage before;" and this anonymous player is supposed to have been Josias or Joseph Miller, the popular Joe of later years. In the same season Miller is credited with a performance of the servant Jeremy, in Congreve's comedy of "Love for Love." There is no further trace of the actor for some four years. In 1714, however, the name of Miller reappears in the playbills, and he is found representing Kate Matchlock, in Steele's comedy of "The Funeral;" the character had been originally assumed by Bullock, and usually, it seems, Kate Matchlock was personated by a male performer. Miller was also allotted the character of Sneak, in Charles Johnson's "Country Lasses, or the Custom of the Manor;" Sir Roger, in Gay's tragi-comi-pastoral farce of "What d'ye Call It?" Clincher, Junior, in "The Constant Couple;" Old Wilful, in "The Double Gallant;" Tallboy, in "The Jovial Crew;" Cokes, in "Bartholomew Fair;" and Sir Thomas Reveller, in "Greenwich Park." Miller continued a member of the Drury Lane company for many years, his popularity increasing more and more. The

majority of the plays in which he appeared, however, can scarcely be known, even by name, to the public of to-day. In the season of 1715–16, Miller was to be seen as Sir Jolly Jumble, in "The Soldier's Fortune;" as Sir Amorous La Foole, in "The Silent Woman;" as the Coachman, in Addison's comedy of "The Drummer;" as Trico, in "Ignoramus, or the English Lawyer;" as Sir Mannerly Shallow, in "Country Wit;" and as the Mad Englishman, in "The Pilgrim." The works of the Elizabethan dramatists were still frequently presented upon the stage in turn with more recent productions. Miller undertook the character of Lance, in Fletcher's "Wit without Money," as it was "altered by several persons of quality;" he appeared too as Clodpole, in "The Amorous Widow," Betterton's adaptation of Molière's "George Dandin;" as Sir Harry Gubbin, in Steele's "Tender Husband;" as Sir Martin Marrall, in the comedy so called; as Don Lewis, in "Love Makes a Man;" and as Sir Joseph Wittol, in "The Old Bachelor." His success in this part was so great, that he presented the comedy upon the occasion of his benefit, when Hogarth came to his assistance, and designed the ticket of admission, which exhibited the scene in the third act, where Sir Joseph's companion and bully Noll is severely kicked by Sharper. The engraving from Hogarth's design is now a very scarce print.

It is evidence of the popularity of Joe Miller that in 1721 he became a manager of a theatre in Bartholomew Fair, Smithfield, his fellow-managers being the favourite comedians, Pinkethman and the diminutive Henry Norris, generally known as "Jubilee Dickey," from his successful performance of Dickey, in Farquhar's "Constant Couple." The *London Daily Post* for August, 1721, announced that at the Hartshorn Inn, Smithfield, near Pie Corner, during the time of Bartholomew Fair, there would be acted "a celebrated droll," called "The Injured General, or the Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green," and "The Woman Never Vexed." It was stated that all the parts would be performed by the comedians from Drury Lane; "the part of Scarecrowe, the foolish country squire, by Mr. Miller; Gudgeon, his domestic servant, Mr. Norris, *alias* Jubilee Dickey; the Undertaker, Mr. Pinkethman," &c. &c.; and the public was further informed that the boxes had been enlarged and made "more commodious for the quality." In the following year Miller appears to have dissolved partnership with Pinkethman and Norris. The newspapers advertised the important fact:

"Miller is not with Pinkethman but by himself, at the Angel Tavern, next door to the King's Bench, and acts in a new droll, called 'The Faithful Couple, or the Royal Shepherdess,' with a very pleasant entertainment between old Hob and his Wife, and the comical humour of Mopsey and Collin, with a variety of singing and dancing." In conclusion, Miller indulged in verse, and proclaimed himself

> "The only comedian now that dare
> Vie with the world, and challenge the Fair."

The droll of "The Faithful Couple, or the Royal Shepherdess," has the air of being an adaptation of "A Winter's Tale," just as another droll, produced by Mr. Miller a few years later, and entitled "The Tempest, or the Distressed Lovers; with the Comical Humours of the Enchanted Scotchman or Jockey, and the three Witches," seems to have been a compound burlesque of two other of Shakspeare's plays.

Miller, it may be noted, represented Aspin, a comic servant, in the comedy of "Love in a Veil," by Richard Savage, on its production in 1717; he was also the original representative of the Miller in Dodsley's farce, "The King and the Miller of Mansfield;" of John Moody, in "The Provoked Husband;" of Brush, in "The Village Opera;" and Cimon in Cibber's "Love in a Riddle." In Shakespeare Miller seems often to have appeared with credit. He undertook from time to time the characters of Osric, Silence, Roderigo, the Host of the Garter, Lord Sands, one of the Carriers in "Henry the Fourth," one of the Citizens in "Julius Cæsar," the First Witch, the First Gravedigger, and the Clown in "Measure for Measure." He also represented Trincalo in Dryden and Davenant's perversion of Shakespeare's "Tempest." From 1714 to 1729 Miller was continuously engaged at Drury Lane; then for a season or two his services appear to have been dispensed with. In his "Dramatic Miscellanies," Davies explains that it was owing to the "mean economy" of the managers that Miller was driven from Drury Lane to the Goodman's Fields' Theatre. "A lively comic actor, and a favourite of the town," he had often appeared successfully as the sailor Ben in "Love for Love," having first played the part in 1720; but by "a piece of manager's craft," as Davies describes it, the part was taken from him and handed over to Cibber, who was now more than sixty years old, and who was

not suited either in voice or aspect to "the rough animation of a sailor." Cibber, however, had studied Dogget, the original personator of Ben, and was able to imitate his method of representing the character. At the Goodman's Fields' Theatre, which had been "newly fitted up and made more commodious and warm," Miller seems to have repeated certain of his more admired impersonations, such as Teague and Ben, John Moody, Sir Joseph Wittol, and the Mad Englishman. He appeared also as Clincher, Senior, as Marplot in "The Busy Body," as Jobson in "The Devil to Pay," Foigard in "The Beaux's Stratagem," and Cacafogo in "Rule a Wife and Have a Wife." In the following season, as Davies relates, the Drury Lane managers were obliged to recall Miller to his old station. They imagined that the public would be interested in Miller's resumption of the part of Ben, and that curiosity to compare his performance with Cibber's would result in several full houses. Miller was heartily welcomed back to Drury Lane, but the managers were, nevertheless, Davies informs us, disappointed in their expectations; for Cibber, though he acted Ben but two or three times, "took off the edge of appetite to see Miller." At the close of the season Miller was to be found again at Bartholomew and Southwark, his partners now being his fellow-players, Mills and Bates. Among other entertainments was presented the tragedy of "Jane Shore," with "The Comical Humours of Sir Anthony Noodle and his Man Weazle." Miller's salary at Drury Lane seems never to have been higher than five pounds per week; but this was deemed a considerable salary in those times.

In 1733 Miller was one of the actors who seceded from Drury Lane, then under the management of Mr. Highmore, a gentleman of fashion and an amateur performer, and formed a sort of commonwealth company at the little theatre in the Haymarket, calling themselves the comedians of His Majesty's Revels. The experiment was not, perhaps, very successful; for, early in 1734, the seceders returned to their duties at Drury Lane, Mr. Highmore having retired from his position as manager in favour of Mr. Fleetwood. Miller reappeared in several of his best characters, the comedy of the "Provoked Husband" being reproduced for the benefit. It had become usual, apparently, to present the play in an abbreviated form; the bills of the night announced that "the original scenes of John Moody will be restored, the part to be

performed by Miller." The popular comedian remained a member of the Drury Lane company until the close of the season in 1738. In the *London Daily Post and General Advertiser* of the 17th August, 1738, there appeared the announcement: "Yesterday morning, died of pleurisy, Mr. Joseph Miller, a celebrated comedian, belonging to the Theatre Royal Drury Lane, much admired for his performance in general, but particularly in the character of Teague in 'The Committee, or the Faithful Irishman.'" Teague had been the first, and it was almost the last, part in which he appeared. Miller's "Irishman" delighted his English patrons, but it seems that the "gentlemen of Ireland" would not admit that the comedian possessed "the brogue." However, as Victor states, in his "History of the Theatres," Miller "substituted something in the room of it which made his Teague very diverting to an English audience," and perhaps more so than if played by an Irishman, for, Victor adds, "I have seen that character so extremely well acted in Dublin that I did not understand one word the actor said." On the same authority, we learn that the favourite actor boasted little education of any kind, and had not even learnt to read. He was a married man, but it was said of him that his principal object in marrying was to have a wife who was able to read his parts to him.

Joe Miller was buried in the churchyard, in Portugal Street, of St. Clement Danes: Stephen Duck, the Wiltshire peasant-poet, writing his epitaph, which recorded that he was a "tender husband, a sincere friend, a facetious companion, and an excellent comedian." Peter Cunningham describes the headstone, in 1850, as "half concealed in summer by a clump of sunflowers;" but the churchyard has in later years become the site of King's College Hospital. Close at hand, in Portsmouth Street, stood the "Black Jack Tavern," the favourite "house of call" of Joe Miller and other of the players. The "Black Jack," we are told, was long distinguished as "The Jump," that agile criminal, Jack Sheppard, having upon a particular occasion jumped from one of the first-floor windows to escape the emissaries of Jonathan Wild.

"Joe Miller's Jest Book" has passed through innumerable editions, and has even been reprinted of recent years. The third edition, published in 1739, was enriched with a portrait of the comedian. He appears as a robust, round-faced, broad-featured, open-eyed gentleman, with a curious expression of comical stolidity.

Reverie.

I.

THE eastern sky was blushing red
'Neath kiss of dawn-gleam's trembling ray;
On seraph-pinions earthward sped,
'Midst fleecy cloudlets soared King Day.
On earth, the perfume-spreading flowers
Were bathing in the dew's bright showers;
Their fragrance joined the glorious light:
Creation woke to new delight.
Thus, of the roseate blush of morn
And flowers' fragrance, love was born.

II.

The morning passed, and far and near
The child of sunlight wandered round;
To youth and maid becoming dear
It made their hearts with rapture bound.
Its perfumed smile created pleasures,
Its laughing look discovered treasures,
It spread its blessings everywhere;
It vanquished fear and banished care.
It first to man taught love's sweet kiss;—
Love's breath brought joy,—love's touch meant bliss.

III.

To ev'ning shadow changed the light,
O'er Nature spread a dreary haze;
In sombre brooding, came the night
And chased away the cheery rays.
With chilly breath then o'er them creeping,
It left the sunborn flowers weeping.
'Neath touch so rough, the child of day
In silent quiver shrank away
And soon its latest pray'r it sighed.
Both love and flowers drooped and died.

H. Herman.

Miss Winifred Emery.

MISS WINIFRED EMERY, whose photograph in the character of Lydia Languish appears in this Magazine, is a grand-daughter of the famous John Emery, and the only daughter of the late Samuel Anderson ("Sam") Emery. She made her first appearance in London as a child in a pantomime produced under the direction of Mr. F. B. Chatterton, at the Princess's Theatre, in 1875. She did not appear again in London until Easter, 1879, when she acted in "Man is not Perfect" at the Imperial Theatre for a fortnight under the management of Miss Litton. In July of the same year she commenced an engagement with Mr. Wilson Barrett, and during a three weeks' stay at the Grand Theatre, Leeds, and the Theatre Royal, Hull, she played Phœbe in "As You Like It," Susanne in "East Lynne," Lady Cootes in "Jane Shore," and Eve in "Charity." On September 20 following she commenced an engagement at the Court Theatre, acting in "Fernande," and afterwards in "A Clerical Error," in which piece she appeared as Minnie Heritage. On December 15 she represented Mrs. Brown in "The Old Love and The New," and on May 1, 1880, she acted Nichette in "Heartsease." Miss Winifred Emery then went to the Haymarket Theatre where, on August 2, she played Rosalie in "A Bridal Tour." At the same theatre she also played Lady Clara St. John in "A Fair Encounter," and Lady Janet Trevor in "Salt Tears." Returning to the Court Theatre in October, she acted Margaret Curl in "Mary Stuart," and on December 6, Kate Mowbray in "Two Old Boys." On the 11th of the same month she played the Duchess D'Almont in "Adrienne Lecouvreur." During the run of "Romeo and Juliet" at the Court Theatre Miss Winifred Emery joined, with Mr. Wilson Barrett's permission, the company of Miss Isabel Bateman at Sadler's Wells Theatre, where she acted in Mr. Henry A. Jones's play, "His Wife." Going to the St. James's Theatre on May 28, 1881, she played Mabel Meryon in "Coralie," and on July 2 she commenced an engagement with Mr. Henry Irving at the Lyceum Theatre, where she acted Nerissa in "The Merchant of Venice,"

MISS WINIFRED EMERY.

'Oh that I should live to hear myself called spinster!'
—THE RIVALS.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN SPECIALLY FOR 'THE THEATRE' BY

Daisy in "Daisy's Escape," and Annette in "The Bells." She next appeared at the Vaudeville Theatre with Mr. John S. Clarke, acting Mrs. Featherly in "A Widow Hunt," and on September 5 of the same year she commenced a tour with Mr. Irving's company, playing the same parts which she had acted previously at the Lyceum, with the exception of Jessica which she represented in "The Merchant of Venice" in place of Nerissa. Returning to London with Mr. Irving, Miss Winifred Emery played Lottie in the revival of "Two Roses" at the Lyceum on December 26, 1881. On March 13 following she acted Mrs. Bunny in "Auntie" at Toole's Theatre, and on the 9th of last December she played Lydia Languish in the revival of "The Rivals" at the Vaudeville Theatre. It should also be noted that Miss Emery has acted in Mr. F. H. Macklin's series of performances at the Crystal Palace, Mirza in "The Palace of Truth," Cynisca in "Pygmalion and Galatea," and Martha in "Little Em'ly."

Eden and Excelsior.

CONCURRENTLY with the death of M. Gambetta, the arrest of Prince Napoleon, and the excitement thereby occasioned in the political world of Paris, occurred a sensation in the theatrical world perhaps even more interesting to the theatre-loving Parisian public because more novel than the continual changes of Ministry which "custom" hath to a certain extent "staled" in their sight. I refer to the opening of a new theatre, the "Eden," and the production there of an extraordinary ballet "Excelsior," which has previously been performed for some months with unprecedented success in Italy.

It is this *spectacle* that, with "Fédora" at the Vaudeville, is attracting "all Paris;" and as it is not unlikely that the ballet will ere long appear in London, a short analysis of it may be found interesting to readers of THE THEATRE.

But before proceeding, I must ask the readers' indulgence for a few remarks upon the Eden Theatre itself, which is alone worth a

visit. The Eden Theatre (the very name is attractive, being so enigmatical) is situated close to the Grand Opera House, and presents a very handsome stone elevation in the Alhambra style. The seats are of two kinds—namely, those on the ground floor, *fauteuils d'orchestre*, and those in a circle above (horseshoe in shape) *fauteuils de balcon*, the remainder of the accommodation being for standing or promenading. The ceiling, supported by enormous nude female figures, is finely painted by Clairin, and repays a careful study. Immediately behind the balcony, and extending the whole length of the circle, is a space for promenading, similar to that at the ill-fated Alhambra Theatre, and opening off this are three immense halls—one on either side and one at the back of the house. That on the left-hand side facing the stage has a glass roof, and is decorated with palms and rockery, and is suggestive of the Floral Hall at Covent Garden. Of the beauty of the other two halls it is impossible to convey any adequate idea: they must be seen. Decorated in the Alhambra style, the detail of the architecture is "picked out" with chocolate, blue, pink, fern, and gold in such beautiful harmony and gradation that, in spite of the many colours, the effect is not gaudy, but most delicate and chaste. The side of these halls abutting on the house is open, so that the interior is visible from all parts of the theatre; and, as one looks at them from this point of view, an answer to the theatre's enigmatical cognomen at once suggests itself: this must *be* Eden or fairy land. In each of the halls there takes place some form of musical entertainment during the long entr'actes of the ballet, and thither accordingly flock nearly the entire audience to promenade and see the decoration more closely, or smoke a cigarette, or quietly enjoy the refreshment proffered by some neat-handed Phyllis in fancy costume, till the orchestra gives warning that the curtain is about to reascend.

So much for the house and its attractions, which must be seen *in situ* to be enjoyed. Now for the ballet itself, which is capable of transportation, and which, I trust, will ere long visit this country.

The performers number over 450 men, women, and children—the last-named playing with wonderful skill and spirit—in addition to the twenty or more who in dumb show aid the development of the different incidents, which, distributed over twelve scenes, illus-

trate the triumph of Civilization (La Lumière) over Ignorance and Prejudice (L'Obscurantisme), the former being represented by a very substantial but graceful being, clad in white satin and gold, and the latter by a man of Mephistophelean aspect. The first two scenes from the prologue—and, although from a ballet point of view, the most beautiful in the whole production—are almost devoid of incident, but serve as an introduction to the struggle about to follow between the characters before mentioned.

Scene 3 introduces us to a village on the banks of the Weser, where is taking place a fête in honour of the return of one of the young villagers who has been successful in the regatta. He is challenged to another contest, and the competitors are about to embark when L'Obscurantisme enters and rails the villagers upon the feebleness of their manual power, for behold coming down the river a steamboat piloted by its inventor, Denis Papin. This the villagers destroy with hatchets and sink it and its inventor, much to the delight of the fiend who instigates the deed. His triumph is, however, short-lived; for the scene changes to New York harbour, with Brooklyn Suspension-bridge, and La Lumière is seen consoling Papin, who is at her feet, as trains rush to and fro across the long bridge, and a large ship steams majestically into the harbour. Thus ends the first incident, as the others will be seen to end, with the defeat of L'Obscurantisme, who falls apparently lifeless as the curtain descends.

The next scene represents the laboratory of Volta, who is discovered intently engaged with an electric battery, and whose gestures betoken alternately failure and success of his experiment. The latter finally triumphs, much to the chagrin of L'Obscurantisme, who is an unseen onlooker, and whose mood alternates with that of the experimenter; presently, Volta having left the chamber, the fiend meddles with the battery and sustains a shock; this annoys and puzzles him, and he is about to destroy the apparatus, when La Lumière again appears and overcomes him, whilst the scene changes to the telegraph office at Washington, where wires are seen, and the ticking of electric needles is heard, and all is bustle and activity. A ballet here ensues of telegraph clerks in a pretty costume, and all carrying huge telegraph envelopes. The ninth scene represents the desert, with the sphinx and a pyramid in the foreground; a caravan traversing this, formerly, desolate region is overtaken by brigands, and a desperate encounter ensues

of the most lively description, horses galloping to and fro, swords clashing, pistols firing, the conflict being gradually obscured as a simoom arises. The chief characters in this scene call for much praise, the aged father and husband making desperate but ineffectual efforts to save his wife and child, and the distress and love of the wife herself being excellently depicted; indeed the whole scene shows the most admirable stage management. The sandstorm clearing off introduces us to the Suez Canal in Ismailia, and from personal knowledge of the *locus in quo*, I can speak to the truthfulness with which this, the only picturesque part of the canal, is depicted. The occasion is the inauguration of the canal, and the stage is crowded with natives of every nationality. A little piece of pantomime is here introduced, La Lumière flirting alternately with representatives of England, Spain, India, and China, each of whom performs a characteristic dance. The incident of this scene is the abolition of slavery; a runaway slave chased by a ferocious-looking Arab is rescued from him by La Lumière, whose protection he seeks, and the master ultimately yields to her in spite of the protestations of L'Obscurantisme. The scene is concluded by dances of a nautch girl and piccaninies, and a general ballet producing many striking effects and combinations of colour, and the stage management is again conspicuous in the grouping and by-play of the crowd during the incidental dance.

Vanquished at all points above the earth, L'Obscurantisme determines to visit its interior, and the ninth scene depicts the operations of the workmen at the Italian end of the Mont Cenis Tunnel. The chief engineers, like the experimenter in act v., are alternately hopeful and dejected, as the noise of the working from the French side is heard or is lost; but ultimately, after an interval of despair, the strains of the "Marseillaise" are heard, and the men, working with a will, the junction is soon made, and with flaming torches the French engineers and workmen troop through the breach and embrace their fellow-labourers. The acting of the engineers in this scene is excellent, and although there is not a word spoken throughout, the incident is rendered most exciting, and indeed affecting. This scene is the last of those representing the "march of civilization;" but a grand finale follows, in the shape of a ballet of armies of all nations—a theme somewhat conventional in such spectacles—but the dresses are as tasteful and rich, and the dances are as well arranged, as

in the preceding ballets. The final group represents Civilization triumphant, and L'Obscurantisme lifeless at her feet.

It has been my good fortune to witness ballets on a magnificent scale at the Khedive's Theatre in Cairo, at the French and English opera-houses and theatres, and, not least, at the "home of English ballet," the Alhambra; but for interest, combination of colours, grace of dancing (of all performers, from the *première danseuse* to the youngest child), the rapidity with which the "effects" are produced, and perfect drill, I have seen nothing to equal "Excelsior," which I would strongly urge readers of THE THEATRE to see, if the opportunity offers.

The Women of Mumbles Head!

[*A True Story of a Lifeboat.*]

POEM FOR RECITATION.

BRING, novelists, your note-book! bring, dramatists, your pen!
And I'll tell you a simple story of what women do for men.
It's only a tale of a lifeboat, of the dying and the dead,
Of a terrible storm and shipwreck that happened off Mumbles Head!
Maybe you have travelled in Wales, sir, and know it north and south;
Maybe you are friends with the "natives" that dwell at Oystermouth;
It happens, no doubt, that from Bristol you've crossed in a casual way,
And have sailed your yacht in the summer in the blue of Swansea Bay.

Well! it isn't like that in the winter, when the lighthouse stands alone,
In the teeth of Atlantic breakers that foam on its face of stone;
It wasn't like that when the hurricane blew, and the storm-bell tolled, or when
There was news of a wreck, and the lifeboat launch'd, and a desperate cry for men.
When in the world did the coxswain shirk? a brave old salt was he!
Proud to the bone of as four strong lads as ever had tasted sea,
Welshmen all to the lungs and loins, who, about that coast, 'twas said,
Had saved some hundred lives a piece—at a shilling or so a head!

So the father launched the lifeboat, in the teeth of the tempest's roar,
And he stood like a man at the rudder, with an eye on his boys at the oar.
Out to the wreck went the father! out to the wreck went the sons!
Leaving the weeping of women, and booming of signal guns,

Leaving the mother who loved them, and the girls that the sailors love,
Going to death for duty, and trusting to God above!
Do you murmur a prayer, my brothers, when cosy and safe in bed,
For men like these, who are ready to die for a wreck off Mumbles Head?

It didn't go well with the lifeboat! 'twas a terrible storm that blew!
And it snapped the rope in a second that was flung to the drowning crew;
And then the anchor parted—'twas a tussle to keep afloat!
But the father stuck to the rudder, and the boys to the brave old boat.
Then at last on the poor doom'd lifeboat a wave broke, mountains high!
"God help us now!" said the father. "It's over, my lads! Good-bye."
Half of the crew swam shoreward, half to the sheltered caves,
But father and sons were fighting death in the foam of the angry waves.

Up at a lighthouse window two women beheld the storm,
And saw in the boiling breakers a figure—a fighting form,
It might be a grey-haired father, then the women held their breath,
It might be a fair-haired brother, who was having a round with death;
It might be a lover, a husband, whose kisses were on the lips
Of the women whose love is the life of men going down to the sea in ships.
They had seen the launch of the lifeboat, they had seen the worst and more,
Then, kissing each other, these women went down from the lighthouse, straight to shore.

There by the rocks on the breakers these sisters, hand in hand,
Beheld once more that desperate man who struggled to reach the land.
'Twas only aid he wanted to help him across the wave,
But what are a couple of women with only a man to save?
What are a couple of women? well more than three craven men
Who stood by the shore with chattering teeth refusing to stir—and then
Off went the women's shawls, sir: in a second they're torn and rent,
Then knotting them into a rope of love, straight into the sea they went!

"Come back!" cried the lighthouse-keeper, "for God's sake, girls, come back!"
As they caught the waves on their foreheads, resisting the fierce attack.
"Come back," moaned the grey-haired mother, as she stood by the angry sea,
"If the waves take you, my darlings, there's nobody left to me."
"Come back!" said the three strong soldiers, who still stood faint and pale,
"You will drown if you face the breakers! you will fall if you brave the gale!"
"Come back!" said the girls, "we will not! go tell it to all the town,
We'll lose our lives, God willing, before that man shall drown!"

"Give one more knot to the shawls, Bess! give one strong clutch of your hand!
Just follow me, brave, to the shingle, and we'll bring him safe to land!
Wait for the next wave, darling! only a minute more,
And I'll have him safe in my arms, dear, and we'll drag him safe to shore."
Up to the arms in the water, fighting it breast to breast,
They caught and saved a brother alive! God bless us, you know the rest—
Well, many a heart beat stronger, and many a tear was shed,
And many a glass was toss'd right off to "The Women of Mumbles Head!"

Clement Scott.

February, 1883.

Our Musical-Box.

After a storm comes a calm; to the feverish excitement of the 1882 operatic season will succeed, during that of 1883, a period of flaccid lassitude, unless present symptoms of coming events should turn out more deceptive than we have any right to expect. Last year, after Carl Rosa had withdrawn to the provinces, having duly performed his spirited annual feat of losing in town what he had gained in the country, we had three Grand Operas in full swing, at one and the same time, within half a mile of Charing Cross. This year, it seems, there is to be no alternative to the Gye-Mapleson coalition with its long dull list of hackneyed operas, oppressive superfluity of executant mediocrities, and one solitary vocal star, warranted to shine for twenty nights only. What is more—or, speaking more strictly, less—the series of "entertainments" in question will commence a month later than usual, and close at its customary period of termination, that is to say between the 18th and 25th of July. The winter has passed away unenlivened, as far as Londoners are concerned, by the in many respects admirable performances of the English Opera Company; and I hear that Carl Rosa's spring campaign at Drury Lane will barely last five weeks, opening on Easter Monday and ending on the 28th of April. In all probability, therefore, throughout the three months that constitute the ascent, summit, and descent of that mighty Pleasure Mountain, the London season,

metropolitan votaries of the lyric drama will be absolutely dependent upon one theatre for their annual modicum of operatic refreshment and recreation.

Musicians and music-lovers, naturally enough, differ very vehemently upon the question, "Is, or is not, the taste for Italian Opera on the decline in this country?" One eminent and erudite authority in matters musical says, "As far as the British public is concerned, Italian Opera is dead, and even in a condition urgently demanding prompt burial." Another of equal renown is of opinion that it was never livelier or more hopeful within his experience than it has been of late—that is, during the last few years. The truth, most likely, lies between and about equidistant from these two extremes. Public favour has, to a certain extent, been withdrawn from Italian Opera, chiefly because the persons who provide that kind of entertainment have distressed their audiences with bad or weak performances of familiar works and have annoyed them by producing vicious, ugly, and worthless novelties. When an opera-goer has to pay five-and-twenty shillings for his stall he can hardly be expected to derive unalloyed enjoyment from hearing a tenth-rate rendering of music he possibly knows by heart, or to waste affection and gratitude upon an *impresario* who persists in assaulting his ears with one new operatic atrocity after another. That, in this capital of over four million souls, more numerously populated than some Continental kingdoms and far richer than any other three cities in Christendom, there exists a public in every respect equal to keeping open—I mean remuneratively to its lessee—an opera house, not only for a three months' season but all the year round, I am convinced. But the institution itself must be judiciously managed, which is equivalent to saying that its arrangements, with scarcely an exception, must be essentially different from those which have obtained at Covent Garden since the death of Mr. Frederick Gye. With respect to prices, for instance, I do not say that the high prices—at once unprecedented and unparalleled throughout Europe—act prohibitively. As long as the management will offer the public a fair *quid pro quo*, vast numbers of wealthy idlers can be found in London ready to pay almost any price demanded of them in exchange for an evening's really first-class entertainment; but not otherwise. What happens, year after year, at Covent Garden?

Whenever Adelina Patti sings the house is crowded throughout; on other nights it is from half to three-parts empty—a melancholy spectacle! In order, therefore, to ensure a full house, Mr. Ernest Gye is obliged to pay a *prima donna* at the rate of two hundred guineas per night; not as much as she can earn elsewhere, truly, but enough to take the bloom off the profit derived from her performances. No Opera House that has not a State subvention to fall back upon can afford such salaries to its stars, no matter of what magnitude or brilliancy; and even subventioned houses, like the Court theatres of Berlin and Vienna, although drawing £30,000 a year apiece from the respective privy purses of the German and Austrian Emperors, decline as a rule to engage even the first of living vocalists at a rate of remuneration which cannot but involve a considerable dead-loss to the management. When Madame Patti was starring at Berlin in 1878 she did not sing at the Royal Opera House, but at Kroll's, where a bold speculator (whose bankruptcy and self-expatriation to America followed hard at heel upon his investment in the Diva) paid her £400 a night, cash down before each performance—more money, in fact, than the Hofopernhaus holds when "total ausverkauft zu hohen Preisen,"—that is, every place taken at top prices.

Even with the assistance of a handsome State subvention operatic managements cannot do much more than pay their way; and the failure of so enterprising and popular an *impresario* as Col. Mapleson even to achieve (in this country, at least) that primary object of every commercial undertaking, goes far to prove that, without such assistance, an Italian opera house cannot be profitably kept open in London for three months of the year. That hard experience has taught Messrs. Mapleson and Gye to recognize the truth of this proposition is sufficiently manifested by the circumstance that their operatic headquarters are now "located" in America instead of in England. It would, indeed, seem that they have resolved to keep one London opera house open during the season, rather with a view to maintaining the "European prestige" of their company in the States than in the hope of making any money on this side of the Atlantic. In an instructive paper on this subject contributed by Mr. Sutherland Edwards to your musical contemporary, the *Lute*, that eminent

writer drily and pointedly observes that in having the money of confiding shareholders to deal with, the directors of the Royal Italian Opera Company (Limited) must not be blamed for acting according to their lights and preferring a short season to a long one. By pushing their cautious policy a few steps further, they would arrive at the supreme wisdom of having no season at all. The fates forfend that they should become sagacious to that degree! A London season utterly devoid of Italian opera would be as lame and melancholy as a three-legged dog. Berlin and Vienna, with a million of inhabitants apiece, keep their respective opera houses going all the year round, with the exception of about five weeks in the sultriest summertide. I cannot believe that London, with her four millions, is incapable of supporting one institution of this kind throughout a period of twelve weeks, at her most crowded and fashionable time of year.

Carl Rosa's brief season at Drury Lane promises to teem with incident especially interesting to British audiences. Resolved to prove the title of his enterprise exact in the spirit as well as the letter, Herr Rosa has announced that, in the matter of operatic novelties, he intends to confine himself strictly this year to works by English composers. He promises to introduce us to Mr. Mackenzie's "Colomba," the libretto of which owns that learned German critic and *littérateur*, Dr. Franz Hüffer, for its author; to the "Esmeralda" of Mr. Goring Thomas, and the "Savonarola" of Mr. Villiers Stanford. The production of at least one of these operas may be confidently anticipated between Easter Monday and Rogation Sunday, and we shall doubtless, in the fulness of time, enjoy opportunities of listening to all three, probably in the order above indicated, though I could wish that, in this case, the "first might be last, and the last first." Carl Rosa has still two splendid shafts left in his quiver of prime-donne; but the rosy God, blind Cupid, and Hymen with his scent-scattering torch, have been busy among the "leading ladies" of his excellent company; and I have even heard it whispered that Lucina is "on hand" in connection with "expectations" that cannot but exercise an extremely depressing effect upon his managerial spirits. Where is the most sympathetic of Mignons—where the sparkling Filina (front name, Georgina) who was wont last year to electrify crowded audiences by the brilliancy and *élan* of her *fioriture?*

Their place in the English Opera Company knows them no more; foregoing artistic triumphs they have lapsed into the natural vocation of their sex, which is (if Iago may be believed) "to suckle fools and chronicle small beer." Mesdames Alvina Valleria and Marie Roze are, however, a host in themselves; and these gifted songstresses, happily for Rosa as well as for his *clientèle*, have, "in spite of all temptations on the part of foreign nations," remained true to the E. O. C. flag.

I have been told that in this and other countries it is by no means unusual for composers to regard music-publishers as hard-hearted, closefisted, unappreciative beings, deaf to the appeals of unknown genius, devoid of sympathy with truly good and great music, witting (not Witney) wet blankets upon the ardent aspirations of persons directly prompted by Apollo to contribute to the happiness of musical mankind. It has even, at times, been my painful lot to listen to a good deal of "choice Italian" and "select Spanish," elicited from song and sonata manufacturers of my acquaintance by the unconquerable reluctance of music-publishers to purchase their compositions at any price, or even to bring them out without paying for them. According to my informants of the "rejected" category, Moloch, contrasted with the average music-publisher, was a genial, unselfish, and liberal being. I have heard unpopular authors hint as much about the magnates of Paternoster Row; but that is not to the purpose. A recent experience, or rather *peine forte et dure*, of mine, in the nature of wading through two formidable piles of new music with a view to the discovery of something at once original and pleasing for voice or fingers, leads me to believe that—as far as their lack of mansuetude towards musical incapacity and unwillingness to produce utterly worthless rubbish are concerned—music-publishers are the most basely-maligned of men. Of some two hundred songs, for instance, that have been offered by them to the British public within the past six months, I only found three that were possessed of any legitimate claims to the admiration of the few and the favour of the many. The majority did not rise above a dull dead-level of mediocrity; many were manifest pilferings, of the patchwork sort, from old familiar strains; many more, veritable vehicles of sound-torment to the discriminating music-lover. Were the publishers of such stuff to be judged by

the compositions they give to the world, they would be set down as benevolent spendthrifts, proclivious to the lavishing of untold gold upon feeble fabricators of "morçeaux de salon" and rickety song-writers. I have reason, however, to believe that they are far otherwise ; but they wrong themselves, as well as the public, by abetting the production of so many utterly worthless works.

Fortunately there are exceptions to the rule of incapacity characterizing the recent musical publications above alluded to. Amongst the songs brought out by Messrs. Patey and Willis, for instance, is one—"When I meet you," by Mr. M. Watson—of considerable merit, tuneful and sympathetic, if not strikingly original. "My heart and I," one of Signor Luigi Caracciolo's latest lyrics (Ricordi), will probably achieve popularity, as the melody is a taking one. Few people listen to or take much account of the words that modern composers set to music ; and it is indeed lucky for the song in question that its claims to attention do not repose exclusively upon its literary text, which is curiously inane where not altogether meaningless. The "Edizioni Ricordi" abound in magnificently illustrated covers, some of which—as in the case of Paolo Tosti's delightfully naïve *canzonetta* for two voices, hight "Napoli"—are instinct with considerable artistic feeling for both form and colour. A *chef d'œuvre* of pictorial embellishment, as applied to enhancing the attractions of a *recueil* of songs, duets, &c., for children, is conspicuous amongst Signor Ricordi's publications under the title of "Les Saisons Enfantines"—a work for each month in the year, frontispieced by twelve vigorous and spirited drawings from the pen of Mr. Alfred Edel, a quaint feature in which admirable designs is a miniature Celsius and Réaumur thermometer, registering on each title-page what ought to be the mean temperature of the particular month musically dealt with. The tunes, pretty enough and easy to learn, are by M. Albert Renaud ; the words, some of them charming, by M. Georges Mengeot. Another tastefully illustrated *morçeau* is a very clever and "fetching" arrangement of the best-known "London Chimes" (Robert Cocks and Co.) as a set of waltzes, most unmistakably "dancing" music. High up in the air, far above London town—a moonlit panorama of which occupies the lower part of the cover—are three times three lithe imps in green, madly ringing a peal of five huge bells,

obviously much to their own diversion. The musical part of "London Chimes," which ought to be heard in every public and private ball-room, is by Herr Rudolf Hertzen.

I am glad to see that the compositions of my gifted friend, Moritz Moszkowski, are effecting a firm lodgment in the favour of my musical country folk. Messrs. Augener & Co. have published several of his later works in a cheap and convenient form, and by so doing have deserved the gratitude of all good P. F. amateurs in this country. Of those which have lately come under my cognizance I wish to call attention more particularly to a *suite* of characteristic duets called "From Foreign Parts" ("Aus aller Herren Laender"), and consisting of six taking melodies, ingeniously harmonized, but not so intricately as to be hopelessly beyond the *moyens* of fair drawing-room pianists. On the other hand, a tarantella by the same author (Opus 27, No. 2) is unnecessarily puzzling to the eye and laborious to the fingers. Of his minuet in G (Opus 17, No. 2) I cannot conscientiously say that it is up to his usual mark; and the "Album Espagnol," for four hands (Opus 21), goes far to prove, from internal evidence, that its talented composer has not sojourned for any great length of time in the Iberian Peninsula. For all that, it teems with charming music. By the way, Moszkowski's new symphony (his third), "Joan of Arc," was played on the 3rd of February at the Concerthaus, Berlin, by Kapellmeister Bilse's newly-constituted orchestra, and achieved an unequivocal success. We shall doubtless ere long hear it at the Crystal Palace; Richter is more likely, I understand, to produce English than German novelties during his next *cyklus* of orchestral concerts.

There is some good homely fun and hearty laughter to be got out of a "descriptive fantasia for pianoforte," composed by Mr. W. Spark, and published by Mr. E. Ashdown, of Hanover Square, under the title of "The Battle of Tel-el-Kebir." In the prefatorial remarks attached to this unconsciously humorous work, we are informed that "never did a body of 14,000 men get under arms more quietly . . . almost noiselessly the dark columns moved off;" but Mr. Spark's "March to Battle" conveys a very different impression of their advance. It is perhaps needless to observe that "The Campbells are coming" appropriately introduces some very terrible

battle music, so ferociously chromatic that a little of it goes a long way to a timidly disposed person. What makes me fancy that Mr. Spark cannot know Egypt well, or be familiar with the habits of a British army in the field, is the episode immediately succeeding the truculent tone-picture of the actual *mêlée*. In all Pharaoh land, to the best of my belief—I speak as one who has been there and still would go—there exists not one full peal of church bells; certainly not in any part of the desert or open country, such as that surrounding Tel-el-Kebir. The merry chimes with which Mr. Spark winds up his musical fray are therefore scarcely in their proper place, the listener being clearly given to understand that they were rung on Afric's burning sands immediately after the action. Not less comic is Mr. Spark's misapprehension of what took place as soon as the Egyptian positions had been carried, set forth as follows in his explanatory preface, "Soon Victory crowned the valour of the British troops, and the familiar strains of 'See the Conquering Hero comes' and 'God save the Queen' rose above the din of battle." I was not fortunate enough to be present at the action; but several of my intimate personal friends were, and upon their authority I venture to assure Mr. Spark that the "musical honours" in question did not come off upon that occasion. That they should do so in his "descriptive fantasia"—intended by him, doubtless, to serve uncounted future generations of Englishmen as an eternal sound-chronicle of the battle that concluded the Egypt campaign of 1882—is an untoward error that I hope he will deplore, if ever it be brought home to him. The price of this, in every respect, remarkable work—marked four shillings on its cover—irresistibly recalled to my memory the sagacious, if a thought cynical, axiom upon which the "unfortunate nobleman" would appear to have modelled his life-conduct for some years before his painful failure to convince twelve of his fellow-countrymen that he really was the "Bart. of B. K." he so persistently claimed to be. It began, "Some people has plenty money and no brains." I need not complete the quotation.

WM. BEATTY-KINGSTON.

S. B. BANCROFT.

'I don't pretend to be a particularly good sort of fellow—nor a particularly bad sort of fellow.'

—CASTE.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN SPECIALLY FOR 'THE THEATRE' BY THE ST. JAMES'S PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPANY, 72, PICCADILLY, W.

Mr. Bancroft.

THE life of every public man is liable to misrepresentation: the actor's life especially so. Concerning few actors have such wild theories been propounded and believed in as in the case of Mr. Bancroft, whose picture will be found in our magazine for the present month. For the sole and simple reason that Mr. Bancroft made his first London success in the plays of Mr. T. W. Robertson, and in the characters of "Heavy Swells" it was firmly and implicitly believed, and it is believed to this day, that the young actor had just left some cavalry regiment and come upon the stage as so many military amateurs have done, notably Mr. Charles Collette, who graduated at the same pleasant little theatrical college—now alas, no more—in the Tottenham Court Road. Mr. Bancroft, in spite of repeated assertions to the contrary, was never in the army; but was a hard-working actor in the country long before he was discovered, as Mr. Hare was discovered, by Mr. Robertson, Mr. Byron, and the then Miss Marie Wilton, and brought up to London to distinguish himself in "Society," and many another Robertsonian play. Mr. Bancroft is only a little over forty years of age, having been born on May 14, 1841, a lucky Friday. He made his first appearance on the stage at the Theatre Royal, Birmingham, twenty years afterwards, in January, 1861, under the present lessee, Mr. Mercer Simpson, and for five years played every possible line of business in the country, including innumerable legitimate parts. It will astonish many who insist that the creator of Captain Hawtree is essentially a modern actor, born and bred in a modern school, to find that he has appeared as Icilius, De Mauprat, Wellbourn, Mercutio, Leonardo Gonzago, the Ghost in "Hamlet," and Laertes. He has acted at the Theatre Royal, Dublin, and the provincial theatres with such stars as G. V. Brooke—for whose acting Mr. Bancroft has a profound admiration—Charles Kean, and Samuel Phelps.

This experience has not been wasted on an actor who has been forced by circumstances rather than inclination to restrict his energies to the plays that were conspicuously in fashion under the famous management, in which he was assisted to success by his wife—the very best comedian of her time, and an artist to the tips of her finger-nails. It must never be forgotten, however, that whenever chance offered itself, and Mr. Bancroft availed himself

of it, he came to the front as an actor of individuality, character, and with a command over a very admirable pathetic stop. If we recall his Sir George Ormond in "Peril," his Triplet in "Masks and Faces," his acting in "The Vicarage," his Count Orloff in "Diplomacy," and his husband in "Odette," it will be seen at once that his range is far wider than that of "haw-haw captains" and faultlessly dressed cavalry officers in modern society plays. He is, in fact, an admirable and painstaking actor, and would be of the greatest value in any company. But his merits do not end here. Half the success of the innumerable plays produced at the Prince of Wales' Theatre, and at the Haymarket, has been due to the unceasing energy and untiring industry of the manager, who for many years has taken upon himself the important duties of stage-manager as well. Mr. Bancroft's whole heart and soul are in his work. He lives and dreams in it. His memory is marvellous, and his patience most commendable. He forgets nothing, and sets an excellent example to the younger actors who have had the good luck to be associated with him. He is a living protest against the slipshod method in which plays used to be produced when he came upon the stage, and it is quite certain that the modern stage, in all its accuracy of detail, finish, and completeness, has much to be thankful to Mr. Bancroft for his unswerving devotion to his art. When a play is produced at the Haymarket it is no child's play, but a very serious business. The actors may know nothing of the scheme, and their ideas may be yet dormant, but already Mr. Bancroft has sketched out the whole plan of the play in his head, has formulated every act and scene at home, so that when the rehearsals begin, no one is wholly abroad, or at sixes and sevens. It is the greatest mistake to suppose that stage management comes of itself. It is the result of enormous application, and though it is a disagreeable phrase, there is no more "conscientious" actor in every respect than Mr. Bancroft. His career has, at any rate, proved one thing—that theatrical success may be made a certainty if two essential gifts are possessed—sound judgment and indomitable industry. Mr. Bancroft, throughout his career, has never made a mistake. Yes, he has made one. He withdrew the "Merchant of Venice" at the Prince of Wales' just when an admirable production had successfully weathered a critical storm. No actor on the stage has been immediately connected with more successful productions. This is something to boast of.

A Fair Enthusiast.

By Marie Corelli.

ITALIANS have generally been credited with a strong aversion to Richard Wagner, the great luminary of the musical world, so recently and suddenly eclipsed. Their musical traditions are exactly the reverse of the Wagnerian theories; and very bitter and sarcastic was the dead creator of the "Niebelungen Ring" upon the "little lays" composed by such small fry as Bellini, Rossini, Donizetti, and others. Yet, in spite of rancour on both sides, and many arguments, heated and long, Italian musicians are more strongly imbued with the spirit of Wagner's writings than they care to own even to themselves.

Verdi and Boito have both been touched by Wagner's magic wand, and are still content to be under his influence; while the profound sensation of regret for the disappearance of one of the most remarkable figures in the annals of musical history is widely felt all over Italy. The Death-Angel has now laid a silencing hand on the changeful chords of Wagner's life, and we are slowly awakening to the fact that there was more greatness in the man than we were at first aware of. Some time before his death, I was staying near Florence with a lady, "beautiful exceedingly," whose eyes are full of dreams and light, and upon whose fair brow rests the sunshine of habitual serenity and happiness. She is a musician—a woman-composer—with a genius which promises to fulfil great and wonderful things, and who, if the Fates are good to her, may make her name a glory to Italy some day. She is a devoted disciple of Wagner, and has most quiet and confident answers for all those who venture to argue with her against her idol. Her study, or rather her music-room, is a bewildering place, full of suggestions of art, beauty, and romance. At its furthest end stands a great organ, whose glittering golden tubes pour forth thrilling sounds of passionate melody whenever my Fair Enthusiast lets her white hands wander over the keys. She has two other instruments—a grand piano and a tender-toned mandoline. Her bookshelves contain volumes of poems and musical works of all kinds. On her table are a few writing materials, and when I visited her, I noticed the score of "Lohengrin" lying near

her desk, in close companionship with a quaint Etruscan vase filled full with white and blue anemones. My Fair Enthusiast, herself a picture, clad in a graceful robe of some soft, white, woolly material, talked much and earnestly with me concerning Wagner, whose portrait, crowned with laurel, looked sternly down upon us from the walls—a fine painting of Beethoven being placed opposite.

"He is the pioneer of the future," said my friend simply; "he is the second link of the chain, after Beethoven. You must remember that when Beethoven lived, the critics writing of him said, 'The hideousness of his compositions is only equalled by the absurdity of his attempts!' Yet what a position Beethoven occupies now!"

"But," I replied, "your favourite Wagner objects to Beethoven."

"That is a mistake. He has founded his own style entirely upon Beethoven. Till Beethoven came, music was like a little footpath across the fields of art. Beethoven made it a broad avenue, Wagner has widened the road still more, and others will continue the work after him."

I looked at the girl-student thoughtfully. Her face was tinted with a warm flush, and her eyes glowed with a soft fire as she continued—

"Those who consider that melody is the only and the chief thing in music are wrong. That idea narrows the mind and limits the judgment to one form, one mode of expression. Melody there must be in music, but harmony must also be there like a robe to clothe it. It may be a simple robe, or a costly one embroidered with gold and gems, but it must be clothing of some kind. See," and she drew her mandoline towards her, and played a ravishing little Sicilian air. "That is melody. It stirs your feelings—you are touched, but not very deeply. The emotion is of a few moments' duration only. But clothe that very melody in a robe of harmonies and you shall never be able to forget it. Wagner is no melodist? Oh, yes, he is, and a great and pure one. He is rich to excess in melody, but he will not give his thoughts to you in the nude. He robes them, crowns them, places in their hands jewelled sceptres, that they may take their seats upon thrones and rule the world, as assuredly they will. A few bars only constitute the theme of Beethoven's 'Ninth Symphony,' 'that colossal Sphinx,' as Louis Ehlert says, at whose feet we sit like pigmies, tapping with blind fingers on its pedestal and affecting to unriddle its enigma!"

"Then," said I, "you are not an admirer of Italian art in music? You prefer the Germans?"

She smiled thoughtfully.

"My fair Italia!" she said, "she has such a trick of improvisation! She *must* sing, and what she sings is always melody, and lovely melody, too. But it is like the song of a child playing in a garden—that is the music of my Italy. One loves it—yes—but it does not satisfy the soul. German music is like the prayer of nations sung in chorus by millions of voices—poured from millions of grateful and passionate hearts. The song of a child is sweet, but the chanted prayer of a world is greater."

I was silent for a while, not knowing how to answer this musing student with the clustering fair hair and poetic eyes; but at last I ventured to observe:

"I am sure you do not think that true greatness can ever be allied with conceit. Yet you must allow that Richard Wagner is painfully conceited."

"I cannot allow anything of the kind," she replied, with a sweet smile. "He knows his own power certainly; all genius must realize to itself the force that is in it in order to thoroughly accomplish its aims. You are a great worshipper of Beethoven, and he wrote of himself: 'I am not fearful concerning my music. No evil fate can befall it; and he to whom it is intelligible must be free from all the paltriness that others drag about with them.' Some people would call that conceit. I call it self-knowledge. What does the American philosopher, Emerson, say: 'Trust thyself! Every heart vibrates to that iron string!'"

I rose to take my leave.

"So then," I said, tenderly holding the small soft hands of my fair musical enthusiast for a few minutes, "you, though an Italian, still persist in following Wagner's footsteps? You, with a voice like an angel, and a touch on the piano as warm and bright as fire; you still love the mysticism and wildness of the interminable musical myths your great master has woven, such as the 'Niebelungen Ring.' In short, you thoroughly believe in Wagner?"

"I do!" she answered, with a glad look in her lovely eyes, "and so will the whole world one day."

She gave me a cluster of violets and anemones, and I took my farewell of her. One short week after our conversation Richard Wagner expired in the arms of his wife at the Palazzo Vendremin, and the world's belief in him has already begun.

Some Amateur Performances.

THERE is no question about the benefit which the stage derives indirectly from the performance of amateurs. Their representations increase the interest for the stage proper, and the influence of the drama is widely spread by the help of the amateurs. Each club has its circle of friends and admirers, and each little coterie helps to bring the professional stage into prominence. Amateurs are attracted to the theatres to see the plays which they intend producing on their minor stage, and to observe the best qualities in the acting of the players. The stage is recruited from the ranks of the amateurs, and it is on record that many once well-known actors first won their spurs as a member of some amateur theatrical club. It, therefore, will not be out of place to briefly notice in this magazine some of the recent amateur performances. For the more important of them we must go back to December 8 and 9, when the Oxford Philothespian Dramatic Society gave representations of Lord Lytton's "Money" and the farce of "Taming a Tiger." This was the most ambitious attempt which this society has yet made before an Oxford public. The choice of "Money" was probably dictated by the desire to get as few lady-characters in the piece as possible. For in reality there is nothing more ridiculous and hideous than to see young men essaying the parts of presumably beautiful girls, and their stately and match-making mothers. The three ladies in "Money" were represented by Messrs. Lushington, Shaw, and Glyn; and though Mr. Lushington struggled hard to give vivacity and aplomb to the part of Lady Franklin, the attempt could not, by the nature of the case, be wholly successful. Awkward movements of the arms, too long a stride in walking the stage, and too low tones of the voice; these are the points where every actor in petticoats reveals his identity, and the Clara Douglas and Georgina Vesey of the play exhibited most of these defects to the full. At the same time it must in justice be said, that a society which is not allowed to act with professional ladies cannot well help itself in this matter, and Lady Franklin, at all events, appeared to give pleasure to the audience. Among the male characters there can be no question that Mr. Bourchier scored a decided success with his Sir John Vesey. His action was uniformly easy and natural, his facial play was excellent, and the conception of the character well sustained from beginning to end. Mr. Pryce Hamer delivered the moral platitudes of Alfred Evelyn with much unction, and improved very much in ease of posture and action as the play proceeded; but the monotony of his voice rendered his moralizings more difficult to bear than even their dreary nature warranted. It is not Mr. Hamer's fault that Alfred Evelyn is such a prig, but by greater flexibility of tone he might have sometimes prevented him from becoming a pedant. Mr. Thomas, as Stout, was much too fussy and fantastical, and the fidgetiness of the hands and legs became after a time almost irritating; but he delivered the sentences allotted to him with a genuine appreciation of their funniness. Mr. Gurney made a great deal out of the character

of Graves, and acted his part admirably. Lord Glossmore and Sir Frederick Blount were both efficiently represented; and more than a word of praise must be given to Mr. Crosskey as Dudley Smooth, whose expression, by-play, and costume left nothing to be desired. The play had been so thoroughly rehearsed that it could not fail to go with smoothness and ease. Even the Club scene, so difficult a one for amateurs, went without a single hitch, and the old Club-member never failed to draw laughter by his repeated calls for the snuff-box.

At the Town Hall, Kensington, on the 14th of December, the South Kensington Dramatic Society opened their fourth season to a crowded house, the performance being given in aid of the funds of the Earl's Court Conservative Club. The first piece presented was Mr. W. S. Gilbert's comedy, "Pygmalion and Galatea." The acting in this, all through, was of the first order, the lines being spoken with confidence and decision, which gave evidence of careful study and rehearsal, the ladies, especially, coming in for no small share of the general applause. Miss Grace Murray, as Cynisca, was excellent, taking advantage of all the strong points and situations connected with the part. The same may be said of Mrs. T. C. Collett as Galatea, who, aided by a remarkably sweet and clear voice, gave her lines with great effect. Mrs. Lennox Browne looked a very proper Daphne, showing off the shrewish disposition of the matron with particular point. Miss Stannard's Myrina was also a creditable effort. Of the gentlemen, Mr. W. L. Hallward, as Pygmalion, took the lead, possessing a good presence, and delivering the declamatory lines incident to the part with much force and almost faultless elocution. Mr. W. J. Fletcher, as Lucippe, looked and acted as a soldier should; while Mr. F. Arden caught the idea of the pompous, henpecked husband exactly. Messrs. F. Upton and W. E. Lock filled the remaining parts, as slaves of Crysos and Pygmalion respectively. The one drawback was the wretched time kept; and this operated seriously against the success of the concluding portion of the programme, which was Michael Balfe's "Sleeping Queen," for, in spite of splendid voices, it had not a chance, and it must have been most disheartening to the artists, as more than half the audience left during its performance. Mrs. Arthur Levy, as Queen of Leon, used her good voice to advantage, but her principal song, "As years go past," written expressly for her by F. H. Cowen, was much interrupted by the retiring assembly. Miss Browne as Donna Agnes, Mr. Bernard Lane as Don Phillipe d'Aguilar, and Mr. W. J. Fletcher as the Regent, well sustained both the vocal and dramatic necessities of their respective parts. The programme, though ambitious, was well carried out, the management being generally very good, and but for the drawback mentioned, the entertainment would have been a great success. The Amateur Orchestral Society provided the band, who deserve a word of praise for their excellent performance of a well-selected programme.

The S.K.D.S. gave two evening performances, in the first week in January, at St. Matthias's Schools, Warwick Road, Earl's Court, when "Pygmalion and Galatea" was repeated. The cast was exactly as given at the Town Hall, and I am pleased to be able to say that the time kept

was greatly improved upon, while the different ladies and gentlemen taking part fully sustained and emphasized the success of their previous performance. I am informed that Miss Grace Murray, who took the part of Cynisca with such cleverness, played for the first time in her life on the 14th of December, the entertainment before noticed. In the later performances a farce, in which Messrs. S. P. Peatt, W. E. Loch, and T. Clay took part, preceded the comedy.

On December 18 a performance was given at the Theatre Royal, Hull, thanks to the generosity of Mr. Wilson Barrett, who granted the free use of the theatre in aid of the local Infirmary Fund, which was benefited thereby to the extent of £113 7s. The entertainment commenced with the farce "Number One Round the Corner," which was capitally played by Messrs. Gresham and B. Jacobs, and followed by Boucicault's "London Assurance." A feature of this performance was the reappearance on the stage of Mrs. W. H. Wallsted, formerly known as Miss Elise Maisey. This young lady was well known in the provinces as a member of Mr. Wilson Barrett's companies, and she retired from the stage some little time ago upon her marriage with Mr. Wallsted, an eminent civil engineer of Hull. The return to the boards for this occasion was marked by a hearty greeting, and she acted Lady Gay Spanker with much vivacity. Sir Harcourt Courtly and Grace Harkaway were played with considerable success by Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Cuthbert respectively. The remaining parts were taken by various local amateurs, who, it must be confessed, failed to make a very favourable impression.

The Romany Amateur Dramatic Club commenced their thirteenth season at St. George's Hall, on the 19th of December, on which occasion Messrs. Palgrave Simpson and Herman Merivale's "Alone," and Mr. W. S. Gilbert's eccentricity, "The Wedding March," were successfully represented. In the drama, Mr. J. Balfour took the part of Colonel Challice, adapting himself to the character exactly, assisting a good make-up with correct action and voice. Mr. W. Richards, as the scheming Stratton Strawless, proved that the character was also in good hands. Mr. W. Conyers-D'Arcy, as Dr. Micklethwaite, acted and spoke with effect, but his presence and make-up did not give one the idea of a medical man. Messrs. A. J. Emberson and J. N. Bolster, as Bertie Cameron and the Servant respectively, filled the remaining male parts. Miss Annie Woodzell made a great deal of the character of Maud Trevor, rendering her lines with pathos, grace, and finish. Mrs. Conyers-D'Arcy assumed the character of the charming widow, Mrs. Thornton, being particularly good in her exchange of sarcastic compliments with the doctor. The piece went very smoothly, and the club undoubtedly scored a success. Gilbert's whimsical "arrangement," which followed, went right merrily, the fun being well sustained. Mr. C. H. Allen, as Woodpecker Tapping, delivered his lines with surprising volubility, and Mr. C. W. A. Trollope created much amusement by his impersonation of Uncle Bopaddy, a deaf gentleman. In the rest of the long cast the following ladies and gentlemen appeared:—Misses A. Woodzell, C. V. Borradaile, Louise Leroy, and Ivan Bristow; Messrs. J. H. Savile, W. F. Willis, F. J. Synge, C. S. Arkcoll, H. Brett, H. Gore-Browne, and P. M. W.

Henry. All exerted themselves with vigour to keep the fun alive, and their efforts were rewarded with hearty applause and peals of laughter. The dresses were supplied by Messrs. Nathan. The musical arrangements, under Mr. Norfolk Megone, left nothing to be desired in that direction. It was announced that the Dental Hospital of London would benefit to the extent of £100 by the performance.

The Bristol Dramatic Society, who have for their president Mr. Henry Irving, gave a performance at Mr. Melville's theatre at Bristol on Wednesday evening, December 20. A large and fashionable audience assembled and showed by their frequent plaudits how heartily the efforts of the amateurs were enjoyed. The club has existed in Bristol but a few years, but during its short life it has commanded the respect and praise of most local playgoers as well as others who are not ardent lovers of the drama. We think we are correct in saying the Bristol Dramatic Society is the only amateur dramatic club in the city, for the "Histrionic," from whom they sprang into existence, has, we believe, long been extinct. The appeals of the amateurs are invariably for charity, and this in itself is sufficient to cause the *élite* of the city to give them their patronage and presence. The recent performance was on behalf of the Bristol Royal Infirmary and the General Hospital. The pieces selected were "Heroes," Conway Edwardes' original comedy, and the always amusing farce called "The Area Belle;" both of which were creditably rendered. The following should be mentioned:—Miss Houliston who played Lilian Herries in "Heroes," Miss Nellie Lawrence, Mary Mason, Miss Sally Booth, and Miss Herries. Thanks to the clever and lively performance of Miss Houliston, the second act went very well. We should not omit to mention an address by Mr. Ross McKenzie, which was neatly composed. It was delivered by the author and was well-received.

A performance of "Richelieu," by the Hampstead Amateur Dramatic Society, was given at St. George's Hall, on Friday evening, December 20, and was notable for the exceptionally capable assumption by Mr. Mark Keogh, the general manager of the club, of the Cardinal. His rendering of the part was scholarly, subtle, and highly promising. He was well supported by Messrs. A. Rowney, L. L. Preston, W. F. Parkhurst, W. T. Pugh, W. Robertson, H. Goodall, J. Crooke, L. Kelly, L. Harley, M. Spyer, &c. &c. Miss Stella Brereton as Julie, and Miss Norwood as Marion de Lorme, gave effective assistance in their respective parts.

The fourth private performance of the Comedy Club was given at the Brixton Hall, Acre Lane, S.W., on the December 21, when T. J. Williams's farce, "My Turn Next," and Messrs. J. Palgrave Simpson and H. C. Merivale's comedy drama, "Alone," were produced. The farce went off very well, Mr. O. P. Wynge, as Taraxacum Twitters, provoking much laughter by his rendering of the funny speeches and antics of the frightened apothecary. Mr. C. W. Melbourne was a good Tim Bolas, Mr. A. Davis somewhat too stiff and ill at ease in the part of Tom Trap; Mr. W. Stigaud appeared in the minor part of Farmer Wheatear, Mrs. E. Renton as Mrs. Twitters, Miss L. Wood as Cicely, and Miss Leslie as Peggy, were all very fair, the latter especially distinguishing herself as the

pert maid-of-all-work. The drama, which tested the powers of the members more severely, did not go quite so successfully, the principal part (Colonel Challice) being taken by Mr. Claude Meller, who assumed a voice and general appearance much too young for the character. Mr. R. E. Montague was a cool and collected Stratton Strawless, Mr. W. H. Revell a passable Bertie Cameron, and Mr. A. Meller a good Dr. Micklethwaite. The ladies were, Miss Edith Ellis as Maud Trevor, and Miss Kate Osborne as Mrs. Thornton. The former gave a pathetic representation of the part, and Miss Osborne proved herself adequate as the smart and piquant widow.

Mr. Percy F. Marshall, assisted by a company principally composed of amateurs, is giving a series of performances of old comedies and standard plays at the Ladbroke Hall, Notting Hill. The second of these representations was given on Friday evening, January 5, when the "The Rivals" was presented. Mr. John Denby assumed the part of Sir Anthony Absolute most efficiently. Mr. Percy F. Marshall successfully mastered the part of Captain Absolute, acting all through with spirit and showing much ability; Mr. Conyers F. Norton, as Bob Acres, caught the humour of the character; Mr. Power, with a very pronounced Hibernian air and accent, was a sufficiently cool and bloodthirsty Sir Lucius O'Trigger; Messrs. H. S. Ram, J. Melton, and E. George filled the minor parts of Fag, David, and the Coachman in a very ordinary manner. Of the ladies not much can be said. Mrs. Lennox Browne would have been a very fair Mrs. Malaprop had she put a little more expression into her speeches; Miss Fortescue's Lydia Languish was a rather clever performance; and Misses Laura and Kate Graves were pretty good in the parts of Julia and Lucy respectively. There is no doubt that the piece suffered a little at the hands of the ladies; although their lines were given without hesitation, they lacked point and emphasis. It shows no little temerity on the part of any amateur company to attempt such a comedy as "The Rivals," more especially at a time when that very play is being performed by a first-class company in London, people cannot help making comparisons, and, of course, it is generally at the expense of the non-professional artistes. However, there was a good deal of merit in the performance, ambitious as it was, several members of the company showing undoubted ability. The stage management was very good.

Some interesting performances were given by the Lustleigh Barn Owls, at Newton Abbot, on January 8, 9 and 10. When amateurs attempt such a representation as that of "The Merchant of Venice," they appreciate much more keenly the triumphs of the great masters of their art, and they also study a play which is worth studying for itself, and, if they are as successful as the Lustleigh Barn Owls, they help a great many other people to study it also, and to enjoy it. In daring the contrast of their pretty scenery and splendid dresses with the rustic simplicity of their surroundings, the Barn Owls gave no doubt an added piquancy to the effect; but their success was due to their own merits, which were considerable. The one great perfection of the whole company was their beautiful elocution, which recalled the French stage. Every vowel was distinct and clear, and the lovers of Shakspearean poetry received full satisfaction by the way in which

it was delivered. This was especially the case with the dignified, graceful Portia, who looked and spoke her part admirably. We think Miss Gould did not quite do justice to the more lively side of Portia's character. She did not fully bring out, though she indicated, the lady's thorough enjoyment of the joke, and we think she was more successful in the trial scene than in the choice of the caskets. Her gestures were all graceful and appropriate, but we think she might have ventured on a little more action and play of feature without losing the extreme elegance and refinement that marked her performance. Bassanio was charming, as he ought to be, but we think that in the trial scene both he and Antonio were a little too reticent and English. Italians, in such excitement, must have been more demonstrative, and some of the usual points, such as Antonio baring his bosom to the knife and Bassanio stopping him, are effective, if rather stagey. Gratiano and Nerissa were lively and interesting all through, and the Duke, as he rarely is, was ducal. The whole piece was thoroughly well put on the stage; there was not a hitch from beginning to end; every one knew what they had to do, and did it, and the performance must have represented an enormous amount of pains, thought, and hard practice. We have left Shylock to the last, for the general merit of the piece did not depend on the exceptional talent which enabled Mr. J. B. Gould to represent the character so effectively. Although Mr. Irving's reading of the poet was followed, there was no marked imitation of his manner and peculiarities. We think ourselves that Shylock was more villanous than it is now the fashion to represent him, having been first taught to hate him by Mr. Charles Kean. We could not detest him at Lustleigh as much as we wished, but it is of course quite open to any actor to think more of his misfortunes than his crimes, and Mr. J. B. Gould's Shylock was quite worthy to live in any one's memory as their ideal Jew of Venice. We wish the Lustleigh Barn Owls would give another performance of the "Merchant of Venice," when we are sure that the less experienced of them would add to their many merits the care and freedom that only practice can give.

On Thursday evening, January 11th, a performance was given at the Ryde Theatre by Mrs. Kemeys, a valuable and experienced actress, assisted by a number of local amateurs. The programme consisted of "Weak Woman," in which Mrs. Kemeys interpreted the character of Helen Gaythorne in a most effective manner. She received good support from Miss Agnes Temple as Lilian, and from Captain Somerset Maxwell as Fanshawe. Captain A. H. Dove as Captain Ginger, Mr. H. Durrant as Septimus Notal, Mr. Kaye Stewart as Arthur Medwyn, and Miss Wiber as Miss Gume, all rendered their parts in an able manner. "A Husband in Clover" was the concluding piece, and it was capitally acted by Captain Maxwell and Mrs. Kemeys.

Lord Lytton's comedy, "Money," was selected by the Roscius Club for its third performance this season, which took place on Thursday evening, the 23rd of January. That the choice was a wise one was abundantly manifested by the success which attended its production, and which was no doubt enhanced by the fact that the majority of the ladies and gentlemen in the cast had played the same parts before, and were consequently

able to add those little finishing touches here and there which go so far towards producing a satisfactory *ensemble*. This was especially noticeable in Miss Kate Erlam's rendering of the *rôle* of Clara Douglas, which she played throughout in a manner which left little to be desired. In her scenes with Alfred Evelyn she evinced a thorough appreciation of the author's meaning, and, which is rare with amateurs, her pathos was natural and unstrained. She was, moreover, admirably supported by Mr. Percy F. Marshall, as Alfred Evelyn, who appeared at home in the part, and played it in a manly and effective style. This lady and gentleman certainly carried off between them the honours of the evening. Miss Lottie Roberts was a good Lady Franklin, entering thoroughly into the fun of the part, but her efforts were sadly weighted by the Graves of Mr. Arthur Shirley, who was monotonously lugubrious and lachrymose, omitting all the lighter touches which render the melancholy widower amusing, and serve to show that his grief is not really so profound or so irreparable as he would have it assumed to be. Sir John Vesey had a capital exponent in Mr. Conyers Norton, who, as the shifty old baronet, was seen in one of his best impersonations. The Sir Frederick Blount of Mr. S. E. Forster was satisfactorily rendered, but his make up, which was otherwise good, was marred by the appearance of his dark hair beneath the fair wig which he wore. Mr. Arthur Snow gave a very gentlemanly and quiet rendering of Captain Dudley Smóoth. Mr. L. F. Bertram, who seems to be troubled with a bad memory and rather wooden joints, made these peculiarities painfully manifest as Lord Glossmore. The rest of the cast was distributed among Messrs. H. S. Ram, E. J. Taylor, Stanley, Lee, &c., and Miss Laura Graves, and calls for no special notice. Miss Rose Dosell presided at the piano, and very agreeably filled up the commendably short intervals. The fourth performance is announced for March 6.

"Is this a barn at Cote Hill, or are we not in London?" was a question put one dark winter's night in a Cumberland village, close by Carlisle, on the occasion of some amateur theatricals successfully carried out under the energetic guidance of Mr. and Mrs. Tomlinson, of Englethwaite. Host and hostess are steady and devoted London playgoers, and they determined to show the Cumbrian folk how plays ought to be mounted, and, for the matter of that, acted out of London. Scenery, dresses, properties, and all accessories were accordingly sent down from the great metropolis, and the young people assembled at the beautiful house that tops the hill at Englethwaite worked bravely for the amusement of guests and visitors. The purely local talent consisted of Mrs. and Miss Tomlinson, Mr. Hodgson Horrocks, Mr. Currie, and Mr. Richards, and they were assisted by "the beautiful Miss Beddome," as she is called in the "north countrie," and by Mr. W. A. Simmons, a very experienced amateur actor. The plays selected were "Betsy Baker" and "The Little Sentinel," and the honours of the evening were fairly divided between Mrs. Tomlinson, Miss Beddome, who was a great favourite, Mr. W. A. Simmons, who made an excellent stage manager, and Mr. Horrocks. Between the plays the audience was delighted by an excellent reading of a tale called "Bobby Berks," with Cumbrian dialect, by the excellent host,

Mr. John Tomlinson, and Mr. Metcalfe, of Carlisle, sang "John Peel" with stirring effect. The performances were so successful that dark winter's night at Cote Hill Barn that they were repeated for the benefit and amusement of the inmates of Garland's asylum on a subsequent evening.

"The Strolling Players," who have for their president Mr. Edmund Routledge, gave a performance at St. George's Hall on February 13. The programme opened with the one-act drama by Sir Charles L. Young, entitled "For her Child's Sake," in which the honours were carried off by Mrs. Rudolf Blind, who proved by her excellent acting as Edith Ormonde that she possessed much ability for the stage, together with experience and a capital style. Miss Louise Stanhope was interesting as Geraldine, and Mr. William Pugh was adequate as Aubrey Verschoyle (pronounce, if you please, "Verskoyle"). But Mr. Cecil Heywood was not well chosen for Mr. Marsham, and Mr. Claude Penley, who was not at all good as Stephen Ormonde, succeeded better as Baby Boodle in Gilbert's "On Guard," the principal piece of the evening. In this some very good acting also came from Mr. Arthur Ayers as Denis Grant, and Mr. William Chandler as Grouse. Mr. Philip Shepherd as Corney Cavanagh, Mr. Waller Lewis as Guy Warrington, Mr. Herbert Shephard as Druce, and Mrs. Howard as Mrs. Fitz-Osborne, were fair representatives of their parts.

At the Londesborough Theatre, Scarboro', on Shrove Tuesday, a capital company of amateurs played Byron's comedy "Weak Woman," and a musical burletta by T. H. Bayly, entitled "The Swiss Cottage." Evident pains had been bestowed upon rehearsal, and Mr. H. S. Riddell, the stage-manager, is to be complimented on the successful result of his superintendence. Colonel Ouchterlony, wondrous as to attire and make-up, was an excellent Ginger, and created much laughter. But the most noteworthy feature of the evening was the acting of Miss Edith Gellibrand. This young lady is one of the best amateurs we have seen for a long time; not only does she possess the natural advantages of a pretty face and sympathetic voice, but she knows how to move on the stage with freedom and grace; both as Helen Gaythorne in the comedy, and as Lisette in the after-piece, she acted charmingly and looked lovely. Miss Lina Gellibrand was thoroughly satisfactory as Lilian Gaythorne, and she and her sister, Miss Edith Gellibrand, may be said to have divided the honours of the evening between them. Conspicuous in the company was Mr. Claude Ponsonby, of whom I have often had occasion to speak so favourably. He is one of the best light comedians I have seen on the amateur stage for many a long year. The theatre was crowded with an appreciative audience.

Our Omnibus Box.

THE present Session of Parliament will not be allowed to pass without some vigorous attempt being made to amend the vexatious laws that prevent free-trade in the matter of the amusements of the people. It may not be generally known, but it is nevertheless a fact, that so far back as 1866 a Committee of the House of Commons, after taking evidence from experts in every branch of theatrical, literary, and music-hall art, deliberately recommended that the whole of the amusements of the people as regards licensing and inspection should be put under one responsible officer of the Crown. All the difficulties experienced now were felt in 1866, and had the report of that Committee been attended to instead of being treated as waste paper, we should have had no theatre difficulty, no music-hall difficulty, no Ash Wednesday absurdity, no fire crazes, no inconsistency, and no duplicated authority for seventeen long years. The theatres and the music-halls would then have been bodily transferred to the Home Office, and would have been properly inspected and ordered as our factories, workshops, and mines. Magistrates would no longer have been called upon to interpret stale old Acts of George II. as regards music and dancing; nor would such anomalies as unlicensed theatres in Chelsea, and patent theatres in Drury Lane, have been permitted to exist, nor would the Board of Works been needed to carry on the functions properly relegated to a department of State. The chaos in which good Mr. Slingsby Bethell does not believe would have been obviated, and in all human probability public taste would not have been vulgarized, brutalized, and degraded as it has been by denying free-trade and fair play to the music-halls of the Metropolis. For seventeen years the law would not have declared it to be improper for a man to see a wholesome and elevating entertainment, because he chose to enjoy a cigar or a pipe after his work was done. As matters stand now, and as they have stood since the days of George II., no one may smoke in a public hall without submitting his mind to the irritation of a senseless entertainment. There is not a capital in Europe, save London, were such absurdities are tolerated.

And what is to be the remedy? In the first place it is rumoured that the new Municipal Bill will place all amusement houses under the proposed Local Parliament, and relieve both the Lord Chamberlain and the magistrates from their present functions. This may be an unmixed good or an unmixed evil. We do not yet know the constitution of the London Parliament. The people who want to be amused may suffer, or they may gain by the reform. For my own part, I should prefer the legislation of the Home Office, or indeed any Government department, to that of a Board returned by ratepayers and possibly tainted by the prejudices of a vestry. But we cannot tell until we see how the thing works, and who knows how long it will be before the proposed Municipal Bill becomes law? Meanwhile Mr. Dixon Hartland, M.P., will propose a most salutary measure, based on the House

of Commons report of 1866; and the music-hall proprietors will do their utmost to obtain a censorship of the music-halls, that will relieve them of the dangers and difficulties of licensing day. If a censor is appointed by the magistrates reporting directly to them, it is fairly assumed that surprises will not be sprung upon managers when they come for a renewal of their usual license. This subject is of far greater importance than people are led to believe. The hard-worked people might be made better, purer, and less coarse, if they were allowed to reach the refining influences of music and the drama. They cannot reach them now, when the law stands in the way of freedom and fair play.

With the exception of Vauthier, there is no actor on the Paris stage possessing a voice of such power as Dumaine's. Some time ago Dumaine had at the Porte Saint Martin a comrade named Machanette, who played "utility" parts. Machanette insisted that his voice was more powerful than that of Dumaine, an assertion to which the latter would never agree. Interminable discussions upon the subject took place amongst the company, until at last, tired of constantly wrangling, the two agreed to bring the matter to the test of experiment at the Porte Saint Martin café. "I'll lay a wager that I will crack a pane of glass by simply calling, Come in!" said Machanette. "I'll wager that you will not be able to do it, and that I will," replied Dumaine. "Two sous against five francs." "Done!" Dumaine commenced. He mounted upon one of the tables, inflated his lungs, and cried: "Come in!" The windows rattled, but did not break. The waiter, however, hurried to the spot to inquire whether he was wanted. In his turn Machanette mounted the table, coughed, cleared his throat, and cried: "Come in!" In a moment ten panes of glass flew into fragments. "What do you say to that?" he said to Dumaine, triumphantly. "I have lost," replied Dumaine, bursting with laughter. What had happened was this:—Laurent, the actor, having been told of the wager made by his two comrades, had placed himself, in company with Alexandre, outside the café, and the moment Machanette had made his trial had smashed the window-panes with their walking-sticks. Machanette never knew how he had been "done."

The theatres in the environs of Paris are, as is generally known, worked by three or four companies, who play the same piece in all the theatres successively. Last winter one of these troupes, that of Vincennes, were one night performing "Le Bossu" at Adamville-Saint-Maur, when, towards eleven o'clock, the actress entrusted with the part of young apprentice Tonio, having finally left the stage, observed that snow was beginning to fall, and became alarmed as to the means of getting back to her home. Eager to reach the railway-station without a moment's loss of time, she determined to set off from the theatre, dressed as she was, in Louis XIII. pourpoint, buff boots, and poignard at the girdle, only

throwing a fur-cloak over her to hide her singular walking-costume. She was accompanied by Philippe de Nevers, who, killed in the first act, had nothing more to do, and both hurried along the avenue leading to the Parc-Saint-Maur station. But, arrived in the middle of the plain, they were overtaken by the storm in all its fury. Blinded, and with the breath nearly beaten out of them, they speedily lost their way, and at the end of five minutes knew no more where they were than if they had suddenly been turned adrift upon the steppes of Tartary. Giving up the idea of reaching the railway-station, they wished to retrace their way to Adamville. Impossible! On all sides of them they could discern nothing but the plain, and still the plain, covered with a mantle of snow. Philippe raged; Tonio wept. At length they perceived a light, and, as the late Ponson du Terrail would have said, that light was a house. They knocked—knocked loudly—at the door. Nobody answered the summons at first; but, by dint of persistence, they at last succeeded in making themselves heard by the inhabitants, and saw a cotton nightcap peering suspiciously between the bars of a Venetian blind. "Who's there?" demanded a disagreeable voice, issuing from beneath the cotton nightcap. "We have lost our way, and want to get back to Adamville," replied Philippe de Nevers. "Or the railway-station," suggested Tonio; "we should have time, perhaps, to catch the last train." Unfortunate Tonio! In pronouncing those words, with the action necessary to give them due point and emphasis, he had thrown open his cloak to consult his watch; his pourpoint Louis XIII. was uncovered, the high boots, the glittering silver hilt of the dagger in his girdle! The cotton nightcap vanished; the blinds were reclosed with a crash; and from behind a voice discomposed by terror roared: "Take yourselves off! I've a double-barrelled gun, and I'll fire on you!" The unhappy artistes fled—they knew not whither. Fortunately, they at last came up with some worthy souls who showed them the way to a rudimentary hotel, kept by an honest fellow named Casimir, who, with a hospitality worthy of the Highlanders of Scotland, gave them shelter till the next morning.

I have received the following kind letter from Mr. Owen Fawcett, of the Union Square Theatre, New York:—"I wish to correct an error in your excellent magazine that appeared in the October number, 1882.

"In an article by W. C. M., 'Rachel in the United States,' page 207, he says 'In Connecticut no dramatic entertainments of any kind have ever been permitted. In Massachusetts, with the exception of Boston, the same has been the case.'

"I will answer with an experience of over twenty years. I have played in both Conn. and Mass., and some of our best paying cities are in what is called here, 'the States,' the Eastern Circuit, in New Haven, Conn. There are three very handsome theatres, one in Hartford, Conn., capable of seating over 1,900, and the town of Fall River, Mass., has one of the largest theatres in the country.

"In the State of Conn. there are exactly thirty places at which Dramatic

performances are given, I will answer for ten of them, having played there; and in Mass. forty-nine, and of that number I have been at twenty-one.

"I merely write you this, so that The Theatre can be clear upon the record."

London will not be long without a theatre as fine and as well conducted as the Alhambra. It would have been a reproach to a great metropolis had it have been otherwise, and had not existing material been utilized. Mr. Leader, so long connected with Her Majesty's Theatre, has discovered the philosopher's stone. Why should that excellent musician and skilled conductor M. Jacobi be doing nothing; why should M. Bertrand, the accomplished ballet-master have no material on which to expand his conspicuous energy, why should the famous Alhambra ballet be scattered to the winds; why should not Miss Fanny Leslie be secured as soon as ever the Leeds pantomime is over; why should all the foreigners in London be sighing for the theatrical home they so much affected, where all was done on such a princely scale? Why indeed! at any rate so thinks Mr. Leader, who will open Her Majesty's at Easter, and give London a splendid show.

Mr. Frederick Neebe is truly an enterprising theatrical caterer. He leases and ably manages the theatres at Bath, Exeter, Devonport, and Weymouth. With his customary desire of appearing well to the front, Mr. Neebe has given Bath the first provincial production of "Iolanthe," which is most creditably put forward at the comfortable theatre in that town. A better rendering of the opera than that given by Mr. D'Oyly Carte's company it would be difficult to imagine. Miss Jessie Louise impersonates the title rôle delightfully, and gains favourable opinions everywhere. The Queen of Fairies is played in very nice style by Miss F. Harrison; and as Phyllis a better representative than Miss J. Findlay could not be desired. Earl Tolloler is in the able hands of Mr. C. C. Pounds, who makes up and plays the character perfectly. Justice is done to Strephon by Mr. Walter Greyling, and Mr. C. J. Stanley is successful as Mountararat. The Lord Chancellor of Mr. J. Wilkinson goes well, whilst Mr. G. W. Marler is seen to advantage as Private Willes. The remaining parts are satisfactorily disposed of. Mr. R. Hare is acting manager here. Mr. Neebe brought his most successful Exeter pantomime of "Robinson Crusoe" to Bath on Monday, February 12th, and will ring the changes with "Iolanthe" upon his other establishments.

The biter bit. A little incident which occurred a few weeks ago during the performance of "Romeo and Juliet" at the Berlin Royal Play-House has caused considerable excitement. Fraulein Marie Barkany, a pretty and talented young actress, lately engaged at the Court Theatre, was the representative of the ill-fated beauty, a part hitherto belonging to Fraulein

Clara Meyer a popular favourite, but no longer in her first youth. As "Juliet" was dressing for the third act, her maid handed her a packet which had just been brought by a *dienstmann;* the excited actress quickly opened it, and turning pale, flung its contents away from her. It was a *Todtenkranz*, from which emanated a most peculiar odour. Trembling with emotion, she ran upon the stage and played her part so well, and with such passion, that there was a perfect "furore." Although it is generally believed that Clara Meyer had sent the "odorous wreath," through one of her admirers, to make her rival nervous, and so fail in her rôle, there are a few who insinuate that Barkany ordered the *Todtenkranz* herself, to create a sensation. At any rate this little incident has helped considerably to enhance the fame of Meyer's rival.

Mr. D'Oyly Carte writes to the papers advocating the *queue* system at pit and gallery doors as in Paris, and, in the warmth of his advocacy, he is a little hard on those members of the public who prefer to stand for hours outside the doors of a theatre instead of securing reserved seats. He thinks that they compose an unruly, pushing, impatient crowd; whereas, at nearly every theatre in London, the expectant audience has very much to contend against. The tables might very readily be turned against the managers. Why do they not compel their architects to provide vestibules,or ante-rooms, for all who wait at the doors, instead of turning them into the street? If the architect neglects the comfort of the hundreds who must wait at the doors in all weathers, why do not managers erect a glass awning abutting from the theatre wall, as Mr. Toole and Mr. Hollingshead have done, in the teeth of a strong parochial remonstrance? Should these courtesies fail, is it quite impossible to open the doors a little earlier these wet and miserable nights? Why should not the crowds be admitted as they appear? There is always some one about a theatre, and I cannot see what harm pittites or gallery folk would do in their seats, reading the paper or a book. At any rate, anything is better than getting wet outside, and these are the people, at present so wretchedly provided for, who are told to stand in order and marshal themselves. No crowd ever yet marshalled itself without a director in the form of a policeman. The weakest must go to the wall; the strongest must inevitably prevail. The *queue* system is carried to an absurdity in Paris, and no one would wish to see it imitated here. We do not want to take tickets for omnibuses, or to be locked up in waiting rooms until the train arrives. But English people love order as well as most people, as may be seen at the ticket-office of every railway station. They want to be directed, not bullied. If Mr. D'Oyly Carte will shelter his patrons, he will earn their gratitude; failing that, let him station a policeman to see that the strong do not prevail over the weak. Besides, the *queue* system is impossible without barriers. A door opened suddenly and letting in hundreds of people packed against it must create confusion, and more than half that confusion might be avoided—not alone by temper on the part of the audience, but by common sense on the part of the managers.

Madame Volnys, one of the most celebrated actresses on the French stage, during the close of the first third of this century, previously known as the wonderful child actress, Léontine Fay, was giving her counsels on the art of acting to an aspirant. Among other sage advice, she gave the following :—"Never forget that acting consists far less in action than in the way of saying the words of a part." I will give you an example. When I was attached to the Théâtre Français, I was cast, on the revival of Scribe's comedy "La Camèraderie," for the part of Césarine. Monsieur Scribe objected. He considered me a melo-dramatic actress, and said that I made *trop de gestes*. I entreated the great author to allow me to study the part and to rehearse it once, promising to give it up without a murmur if my efforts displeased him. All the greatest scenes of Césarine are in the third act. Well, in this act, at rehearsal, I came on the stage dressed in furs with my hands in a muff. I made all my effects by expressions, looks, and slight movements of the head, without once removing my arms from the muff. At the end of the act I went down to the footlights, and addressing Monsieur Scribe, who was superintending in the stalls, I said, with a profound courtesy, "*Eh bien ! est-ce que je fais trop de gestes?*" Scribe was delighted, and not only insisted on my retaining the part, but made me a present of all my splendid dresses. During the whole run I never played my greatest scenes otherwise than with my hands closely confined in my muff.

Those "young eyases" at the Avenue Theatre, who have been bearing it away, Hercules and his load too, just now, represent a stage institution of very respectable antiquity. The first "aiery of children" employed for histrionic purposes that we find recorded appear to have been the "aiery" belonging to the Chapel Royal, St. Paul's. As early as 1378 these Paul's children were petitioning Richard II. against the infringement by certain "ignorant persons" of the aiery's exclusive rights to perform a highly popular "mystery" as a Christmas piece. From mystery-acting of this kind, the children of Paul's passed, in process of time, to the "regular" drama. At the accession of Elizabeth they were considered the first company of actors in the kingdom. Their supremacy they seem to have owed in part to the skill and experience of Richard Bower, the Perrin of his day, who had "administered" them during the three preceding reigns, and in part, no doubt, also, to the very liberal powers with which their manager was invested by that series of Royal Commissions which authorized him "to take up" for the service of Her Majesty as many promising youngsters as he might think fit. Not that he would be likely to meet with many recalcitrant recruits. Her Majesty's "unfledged minions" were not only allowed to "flaunt it in silkes and sattens," and to outrage the sumptuary notions of an anonymous writer who foreshadowed Prynne by "the gorgeous decking of their apparel," but their pay, and the presents they received in addition—just as the French actor of to-day receives his *feux*—every time they acted, must have been well worth having. Thus, on March 10, 1589–90, there was paid to the children of Paul's for three plays no less a sum than £20, and "by way of reward" an additional sum of £10.

The success achieved by Bower's company eventually brought about the formation of rival "aieries," such as the Children of Westminster, the Children of Windsor, and, more famous than either, the Children of the Chapel Royal. And, it is to be feared, that these rivals of the Paul's company did not always stick to legitimate and loyal opposition. Now and then, it appears, a "Young Roscius" belonging to the rival house would be actually kidnapped by an unscrupulous *entrepreneur* at the other end of town. Sebastian Westcott, Bower's successor, had "one of his principal players stolen and conveyed from him" in this way; and a body no less august than the Privy Council took the matter up, and called upon a no less eminent personage than the Master of the Rolls "to proceed with such as he found guilty according to law, and the order of this realm."

Conspicuous amongst the mannikin company of the Chapel Royal must have been that "S. P." on whom Ben Jonson wrote those dainty, tender lines, that prove, even more plainly than does the famous sonnet, what a master he was of this kind of writing when he liked. "S. P." was Salathiel Pavy, the little "old man" of the troupe. But let the Laureate speak of him. "Rare Ben" is so forgotten that his verses may read new:—

"Weep with me all you that read
This little story,
And know for whom a tear you shed
Death's self is sorry.
'Twas a child that so did thrive
In grace and feature,
That Heav'n and Nature seem'd to strive
Which owned the creature.
Years he number'd scarce thirteen,
When fates turned cruel,
Yet three fill'd Zodiacs had he been
The stage's jewel;
And did act (what now we mone)
Old men so duly
As soothe the Parcæ though him one,
He play'd so truly;
So by error to his fate
They all consented,
But viewing him since (alas! too late)
They have repented,
And have sought, to give new birth,
In baths to steep him,
But being so much too good for earth,
Heav'n vows to keep him."

We have had a rush of aspirants for dramatic fame tumbling upon us one after the other, and the popular Gaiety *matinées* have been properly used for the maiden efforts of ambitious young men and women. It is really difficult to see what else they can do. To tell them to go into the country is to tell them so much nonsense. There are no stock companies in the country, and managers do not fill the ranks of travelling companies with untried amateurs. And yet in certain quarters where every maiden and

ambitious effort is treated with ignorant contempt, and where every gentleman or lady going upon the stage is overhauled in a column at least of vulgar personality, the country is always recommended. Of course utilize the country, and a very good practice too ; but how, for instance, could Miss Rosa Kenney, or Miss Filippi, or Mr. Gilbert Farquhar have ever got to the country unless they had made a public appearance in London, and risked the inevitable column of offensive patronage or unrelieved rudeness ? Some of the actresses of the future who made the experiment, such as Miss Eweretta Lawrence and Miss Rosina Villiers, were found so good that they at once stepped without any apprenticeship into London engagements, and indeed they are quite as clever, if not better, than many who have a London reputation. It cannot be doubted that Mr. Gilbert Farquhar will soon come to town, and will be usefully employed in many plays. He, like so many others, has to pay the penalty of being well-bred, by being treated to long and insolent articles as a sop to that indifferent class of actor that considers the stage ought to be reserved for struggling people of indifferent origin, and who wail about so and so taking the bread out of the poor actor's mouth ! The stage is an art as well as any other art, and the Gilbert Farquhars of to-day have as much right to practise it as princes and peers have to exhibit at our picture galleries. This inverted radicalism is extremely silly. How far has the stage suffered from welcoming to its arms men and women of the highest education and most gentle breeding? It has not only obtained a valuable addition of strength, but has materially improved the status of the stage. When prejudice against the actor *quâ* actor is disappearing, it is curious to notice the prejudice against good breeding being set up in its place. Let us have more Arthur Cecils and Brookfields and Farquhars and Miss Lawrences, and so on, if their humour can please us and their natural refinement can charm. At any rate, do not let them be driven off by the short, snappish, and currish bark of ill-tempered prejudice. So far as one can judge, ladies like Miss Calhoun, Miss Eweretta Lawrence, and Miss Villiers will take a high place in the thinned ranks of English actresses.

The one hundreth night of a pretty comic opera ought to be chronicled in a magazine devoted to the drama. Such a fate has befallen "Rip Van Winkle," the musical version of Washington Irving's famous legend. It was in the legendary or mystical part of the composition that the original performance fell somewhat short of what had been expected. The scene preparatory to Rip's long sleep left something wanting. All that has now been improved, and the goblin-haunted scene gains in meaning and intensity by beautiful tableaux and a clever and picturesque arrangement of the stage. The cast is also improved by the welcome reappearance of Miss Camille Dubois, a very charming artist, who allows time to pass her by, and is both graceful and sympathetic. The performance of Mr. Lionel Brough is one of the most amusing things on the comic stage. The question of the hour is, "How on earth does he jerk that cigar into his mouth?" It is the talk and trial of smoking-rooms, and the result—burned faces !

As a curiosity in the art of astounding impudence, I venture to print, *in extenso*, a playbill I have received from Whitehaven, announcing the production of "Fédora," the greatest play of the age, and declaring it to be the sole property of Mr. Gardiner Coyne, whilst, as all the world knows, the sole and exclusive right of performing "Fédora" in Great Britain and Ireland has been purchased from M. Victorien Sardou, the author, by Mr. Bancroft, of the Haymarket:—

THEATRE ROYAL, WHITEHAVEN.

Programme.

Sole Lessee . . . . . Mr. GARDINER COYNE.
Directress . . . . . Miss BERTHA FLETCHER.

OPEN EVERY EVENING.

NOTICE.

Production of the Greatest Play of the Age.

First Time at any Theatre, in Great Britain and Ireland, of an English Translation of the great French Play, now being performed nightly at the Vaudeville Theatre, Paris, by Madame Sarah Bernhardt, before thousands of crowded and delighted spectators, entitled, LORIS and

FÉDORA!

in which the accomplished actress,

Miss BERTHA FLETCHER

(Mrs. Gardiner Coyne),
Will appear as "FÉDORA," Every Evening.

☞ This great Play (being freely translated from the French, and written expressly for Miss Bertha Fletcher), is the sole property of Mr. Gardiner Coyne, to whom it is *Fully Licensed by the Lord Chamberlain, and duly protected;* and now produced for the first time, with all the requisite Scenery, Music, Costumes, Lime Light Effects, &c.

Grand Production of the

GREATEST PLAY OF THE AGE!

On MONDAY EVENING, January 22nd,
And Every Evening until further notice,
Will be produced the Romantic Play (freely translated from the French),
entitled, LORIS and

FÉDORA!

The New Scenery designed and executed by Mr. W. V. Franklyn; the Overture and Music by Mr. J. W. Benson; the Lime Light Effects by Mr. F. Ridgway; the Magnificent Dresses, worn by Miss Bertha Fletcher, designed by Mons. Wörth and Madame Elise, &c.

Count Vladimar (Son of the Chief of Police) ... ... Mr. W. Carson.
Ivan (his Valet) ... ... Mr. H. Kevern.
Tchiliff (a Jewish Merchant). Mr. A. Jefferson.
Gretch (Lieutenant of Police). Mr. R. Fitzgerald.
Loris Ipanoff (a Russian Gentleman) ... ... Mr. G. H. Beaufort.
The Princess Fédora Romanzoff (a rich Widow) ... Miss Bertha Fletcher.
Michel (her Maid) ... Miss Lizzie Rosier.
Doctor, Guests, Attendants, &c.

Principal Incidents of this Marvellous Exciting Play:—

Russia.—Eve of the Marriage of the Princess Fédora and Count Vladimar. Sudden Disappearance and Mysterious Death of the Count. Vengeance on the Murderer of my Dead Lover!

Paris.—Fédora's Withered Heart under the Mask of Gaiety. The Lover in the Net. Love against the World.

London.—Marriage of Loris and Fédora. The Nihilist Spy. Terrible Accusations! Death of Fédora!!

It is as well to let all provincial managers know that Mr. Bancroft is determined to proceed against any one infringing his rights for heavy damages, and he is quite right to do so. There was a time when French authors got nothing whatever for the plays that were the bases of the best dramas, melodramas, and farces ever seen in this country. Five-and-twenty years ago the stage subsisted on annexed French pieces. Mr. Bancroft, and managers of his era, were the first to pay French authors for their work, and they pay them heavily. They, in turn, ought to be protected by their brother managers, and such programmes as these, at whatever cost, ought to be exposed in their interests.

I look back through the vista of fifteen years and behold what was then the New Queen's Theatre, in Long Acre. The play to be enacted to-night is by Mr. Henry J. Byron; it is a domestic piece, and called "Dearer than Life." Mr. Toole is to be the hero, one Michael Garner, and there is much interest attached to the experiment, because just now he is breaking away from the purely farcical parts with which his name has been associated, and undertaking "Robsonian" characters of pathetic interest. The juvenile *rôle* of Charles Garner is set down for Charles Wyndham, a young actor who made a great hit on the opening night of the Queen's Theatre, in a play by Charles Reade, and Bob Gassitt is assigned to Henry Irving, an actor of whom all London is already talking as a delineator of strong character. Already he has "created" Rawdon Scudamore, in "Hunted Down," at the St. James's, and appeared with great strength in "Idalia," a dramatic version of one of Ouida's novels, and he has yet to appear in "The Lancashire Lass," and be specially complimented by Charles Dickens for his admirable acting; moreover, he has yet to create Mr. Chenevix and Digby Grant, and to enter into a career of wider usefulness. Uncle Ben is to be played by Mr. Lionel Brough, and a wonderfully realistic performance it turns out to be; and Mr. Kedgely is entrusted to Mr. John Clayton, a young actor who is already making his mark. The interesting heroine is Miss Henrietta Hodson, a charming, sympathetic, and sweet-voiced actress, who by-and-by is to be manageress of the Royalty, and to distinguish herself still more. And when did all this happen? you will ask. Well, on January 8, 1868, fifteen years ago, and yet I remember it all as if it were yesterday, even to the make-up of Mr. Clayton's wig and whiskers. Since that time, nearly every one of the original cast have become famous as managers or manageresses, and have drifted away from domestic drama of so simple a kind. Mr. Toole remains the same tender-hearted, honest, amusing, and pathetic Michael Garner of old, with fun as fresh as ever, and force unimpaired. He plays the part admirably, with more than his accustomed humour and pathetic force. In Mr. Toole's clever little company, two members stand out strongly, Mr. E. D. Ward as Charles Garner, and Mr. Billington as Uncle Ben, a character quite out of his usual line, but one that has a very happy result.

But one of the most interesting features of this revival is the appearance at this theatre of Miss Marie Linden, a young actress of exceptional

cleverness, and one who is eminently sympathetic to her audience. I had the pleasure of seeing this young lady act at the Philharmonic Theatre some months ago in a play by Mr. Mackay, and thought very highly of her talent, and regretted to find her the other evening so ill-placed as she was in "The Yellow Dwarf," at Her Majesty's Theatre. At this little theatre Miss Linden has found a congenial home, and she will find the very pieces that will suit her emotional and graceful style. Though very young, she has evidently had experience. She is no novice at her art, and she has that best of all gifts in an actress—a melodious voice. In the characters hitherto identified with Miss Lydia Foote, Miss Marie Linden is likely to be specially identified, and her career will be watched with great interest. The excellent musical farce, called "Guffin's Elopement," goes better than ever. Mr. E. D. Ward's acting of Mr. Collingwood Sampson, the gurgling visitor to the inn, is an excellent bit of original character; and Mr. Toole's story of the adventure in Number Nine, and his song, "The Speaker's Eye," bring one back to the good old days of farce, not to be seen anywhere now but in King William Street, Strand.

Mr. A. H. Wall writes to me as follows:—"I have just seen in your February number Mr. H. Beerbohm-Tree's good-natured attack upon my paper in the January number of *Time*. My meaning has been somewhat misunderstood, and consequently misrepresented (perhaps because I do not express it with sufficient clearness), and he has accidentally given as mine an opinion of Mr. Dutton Cook's, overlooking my quotation marks. Will you kindly permit me to say that I do not suppose the character of Othello would gain in dramatic force, sentiment, or feeling by being played in 'a white tie and patent leather boots,' although I have seen a great actor wearing those articles hold a large audience spell-bound while declaiming scenes from that wonderful tragedy. May I moreover add that, on the other hand, I cannot conceive a tragedian not suffering disparagement, or a tragedy not losing dignity and power, by being associated with absurd costumes which chanced to be archæologically accurate, although where accuracy of costume lends force to the actor's conception, and harmonizes with that of the author, I should shake hands heartily with Mr. Beerbohm-Tree's idea, and earnestly desire its adoption.

"I cannot, by-the-by, regard Shakespeare's anachronisms as trivial."

The last work of the late George Mason, entitled "The Harvest Moon," now being exhibited at Mr. Dunthorne's studio in Vigo Street, is one of those pictures which must rivet our attention by its wonderful portrayal of life and character, combined with a rare perception for the beauties of Nature. It will probably not greatly attract the eye of the casual observer, so subtle, so delicate, are the ideas with which the whole subject is invested. But those who linger and ponder over it will be amply repaid by the thoughts it inspires and the beauties it reveals to us at every moment.

At the first glance it is a little puzzling—judging by the full moon already high in the heavens—to account for the warm red light which envelops the whole composition, until one becomes aware that the artist's intention has been that the rays of the setting sun, supposed to be behind us, are in no way abated, though the moon has already risen. Many are the poems which could be made out of this picture. Take, for instance, the winding lane, overshadowed by thick masses of foliage, down which are wandering a country girl and youth, seemingly wholly oblivious of their companions, who are wearily wending their way home after the day's work. A sweet study, indeed, does this country lass make, in her pink frock, large white apron, and sun-bonnet, which enhances the fair face it shelters. Her arms are flung behind her head, and the whole pose of the straight lithe figure is admirable. So is the expression of the face, with its half-curious, half-wondering look as she listens to the whispered words of the lad by her side. The violin under his arm betokens that, though he has borne his share in the day's toil, it has been cast aside as soon as possible, so that he may please some one else by the voice of the music he loves and understands. The exquisite harmony of soft colours immediately surrounding them blend in with the reapers, whose figures occupy the centre of the picture. The attitudes both of men and women are lifelike in depiction of that utter weariness, that longing for home, where they will enjoy the rest so well earned. Every figure possesses a striking individuality—from the lad passing through the low wooden gate (his scythe, round which his arms are twined, slung across his back) to the girl bearing home the sheaf of wheat, which is transformed into a soft rose colour by the light of the setting sun. As a whole, it must be affirmed that there is a certain irregularity about the work, which makes us inclined to draw comparisons between one portion and another, thus regarding them as separate subjects instead of an undividable whole. But, as we have before said, this may arise from the various thoughts it calls into play. The quiet loveliness in which the subject has been conceived and executed is supreme; and we are loth to break the spell which, for the time being, it casts over us, unwilling to bid farewell to such an atmosphere of peace and rest. Nor must we forget to mention the etching which Mr. Macbeth has made of this picture, which in exquisite delicacy of touch and outline leaves nothing to be desired. In every way it is worthy of a work such as this, which must linger in the imagination as a marvellous illustration of character, mingled with touching pathos, exquisite colouring, and a rare appreciation for all that is most holy and beautiful in nature.

The article headed "A Ladies' Debate on Henry Irving" has attracted considerable attention, and to judge from the correspondence I have received on the subject, a desperate endeavour has been made to express in words appropriate and convincing the thoughts that were evidently in the mind of Miss Rees, when she so enthusiastically endeavoured to combat the heterodoxy of Mrs. Brooksbanks on the subject of the manner and personality of our greatest actor. It is questionable if a neater or more critical sum-

mary of Mr. Irving's persuasiveness has been given than in an article by Mr. J. Comyns Carr on "English Actors," printed in *The Fortnightly Review* for February. Our readers will be glad of the quotation; and if it leads them to turn to the article and to study it, they may be persuaded at one blow of the fallacy of the statement, that "we have no great actors, and no good critics."

"In place of the formal principles of a school, Mr. Irving brought to his task the merits and defects of a strongly defined personality. From the narrow realism of Matthias in 'The Bells,' he passed to the interpretation of the characters of poetical drama, evincing at every step new and original powers of intellectual perception, and gaining with every fresh experiment increased command over the technical resources of his art. But the peculiar idiosyncrasies of his style have followed him throughout his career, repelling those whom they do not attract, and causing a certain class of critics, who fail to perceive any deeper significance in his work, to deny his title to the place he has undoubtedly won for himself in public esteem. I cannot but think that such critics take too little account of the part which artistic individuality has always played in the triumphs of the theatre. It is sometimes said that the actor lives but for the hour, and that, unlike the professors of other arts, he is unable to leave behind him any solid or enduring monument of his genius. In this there is only half a truth, for it leaves out of sight the compensating advantage to the player of enjoying a reputation which posterity can neither question nor destroy. The mannerisms of the actors of the past are lost in the tradition of their power; the recollection of their influence over the public of their time, if it does not exaggerate the reality, at least grows richer in ideal suggestion as the living form of the actor's presence loses distinctness and definition. The intellectual strength of the impersonation thus outlives the image of the man, and in our gratitude for the passion he displayed, and for the emotion he excited, we willingly banish remembrances of those marked peculiarities of style and manner, which even in the cases of the greatest actors must often be inappropriate to the characters they are called upon to interpret. It is this inevitable presence of the artist in his work that renders acting, considered as a vehicle for the embodiment of the abstract conceptions of poetry, the most difficult and delicate of all the arts. The painter can take from his model just so much as he needs for the purposes of his picture; he may accept the inspiration of reality without making himself its slave; but the actor in pursuit of an ideal invention is met at every turn by the hindrance or the help of his own personality, and from this there is no possibility of escape. An art which has to submit itself to such conditions cannot hope for faultless harmony of effect. It is enough for the actor if he can suggest to us the varied kinds of beauty which his craft is sometimes powerless to render completely, and if in special moments of inspiration he can by an intellectual effort so absolutely identify himself with his character as to efface the recollection of all that is ineffective in the inferior parts of his work. Judged according to this standard, it seems to me that Mr. Irving's fame rests on a sure foundation. The desperate calm of mingled passion and fear in the great scene of 'Eugene Aram;' the controlled pathos of the closing act of 'Charles I.;' the sinister comedy of 'Richard III.;' Shylock's fixed and unalterable resolve of vengeance, subtly alternating in its expression between the low cunning and husbanded cruelty of a humiliated race, and the dignity that is the inalienable possession of suffering and wrong; the humour that plays upon the surface of Iago's passionless delight in human torture; the chivalrous sympathy with sorrow, and the manly tenderness of heart, that break through the cynical armour of Benedick; these are, to my mind, memorable instances of an actor's power over his art and over his audience that will outlast the objections, however justly grounded in themselves, that can be brought against isolated passages in each or all of the performances in which they are displayed."

When such articles as Mr. Comyns Carr's in *The Fortnightly*, and Mr. Wedmore's in *The Nineteenth Century*, on the subject of modern dramatic art, appear in one month, it cannot be said that dramatic criticism is wholly a lost art.

A theatrical magazine is surely the place to preserve the occasional verses and addresses that mark important dramatic occasions, and are the epitaphs of departed friends. One of the neatest and most felicitous of these was that written by Mr. Henry S. Leigh, and admirably recited by Mr. Fernandez, on the occasion of the benefit awarded to the widow of Charles Lamb Kenney, author, wit, dramatist, and critic. Turn to any of the old theatrical books, and be they written by David Garrick, his contemporaries or successors, where can better verse be found than this?

A frolic fancy, tireless on the wing,
With subtle wit which never left a sting;
A memory stocked with aptly pleasant lore,
A tongue to keep full tables in a roar;
Mirth ever fresh to grace the comic scene,
With lyric smooth or jest adroitly keen;
A critic's power, in kindly spirit plied—
These all took flight when Charles Lamb Kenney died;
Whose nature, fondly faithful to the end,
Ne'er made one enemy nor lost one friend.
Few lives are left among us less to blame
Than his who bore the gentle "Elia's" name.
Still, though the lost one all our praise command,
Let praise be linked with pity, hand in hand.
Sore sickness comes—we scarce know how or when—
To cramp the brain and paralyze the pen;
Do as we may, the Fates are stubborn still,
And make the body tyrant o'er the will!
'Twas his to bear again and yet again
Long days and longer nights of bitter pain;
'Twas his, when death's release was drawing nigh,
To quit the world and care without a sigh;
But *one* was left, and left forlorn indeed,
For whom, good friends, 'tis ours to-day to plead
A duty sacred and a solemn task,
A favour—yet an easy one to ask.
—'Tis granted! Let me, pray, the boon requite
With heartfelt thanks—the grateful widow's mite.

"Is the Dramatic Authors' Society dead?" is a question that has been asked me by numerous correspondents, for the most part amateurs very anxious to play pieces belonging to the Society, and unwilling to infringe on the rights of authors. No, certainly not. Mr. Palgrave Simpson, the courteous and respected secretary, has retired from the post he held so long and worthily. So far as I can gather, the case stands as follows:—Last summer a committee was appointed to consider the condition, present and future, of the Dramatic Authors' Society, and at the special general meeting, held on January 11, it was resolved: 1. That the Dramatic Authors' Society cease to do business *as an agency* on the 25th March next, and that all the assets of the Society be realized, and the debts and liabilities of the Society be discharged. 2. That the members of the Dramatic Authors' Society be requested to entrust their agency business, given up by the Society, to Mr. Douglas Cox, who for the last fourteen years has been in

the service of the Society and now proposes to carry on the business as a Dramatic Authors' agent. In response to this latter resolution, most of the existing members of the Society have entrusted the agency of their pieces to Mr. Douglas Cox, who retains the present offices and all the machinery connected with the working of the Society, and has, in addition, appointed agents in all the large towns in the United Kingdom. I am given to understand that a proposition is about to be made whereby the Dramatic Authors' Society will still be carried on for the purpose of discussing the rights of authors and all matters pertaining to the copyright law, and that Mr. Douglas Cox has placed his offices at the disposal of the members for meetings to be periodically held.

Mr. A. Oakey-Hall has, in the *Spirit of the Times*, of New York, written a very clever and accurate description of the theatrical storehouse presided over by Mr. S. French in the Strand. In the course of his wanderings over the old mansion our author is supposed to have a dream of celebrated actors and actresses.

"By the time my thorough explorations of the old mansion was ended a heavy fog had fallen outside, and duskiness was creeping into cupboard corners and shelving crannies, and, as I passed down through what I mentally called Time's 'play' room, it seemed for an instant to be peopled. And upon no day since have I been enabled to dispel an illusion that I caught glimpses of the old players and authors (whose bones and pens are alike in dust), or that they daily hold receptions amid the printed copies of works which were their pride, or glory, or disappointment, or amusement, in the life of London, which, it is to be hoped, French *père* and French *fils* may long enjoy. Amid those glimpses (quickly seen, as battalions are beheld in dark nights by a sentinel under a flash of lightning), there seemed to be, in all the glory of bag-wigs, knee-breeches, broad-coats, laces, and swords (the dress of their period), the stately Betterton; the versatile Cibber; the grotesque Quin; vivacious 'Dick' Estcourt; the impassioned Barton Booth and Spranger Barry; the popular Mossop and John Henderson, and the popularized Ned Shuter, Quick, and Tom King; the plastic Macklin; the 'plausible' Jack Palmer; Farren the first; fidgetty 'Sam' Foote; Gentleman Yates; the elocutionary Baddeley; the doubly-honoured Cumberland; loquacious Tate Wilkinson; the witty Congreve; the plodding Murphy; the jovial Colmans; the inspired Sheridan; the 'manners-catcher' Holcroft; the unmanageable Samuel Johnson; the coarse Van Brugh; the polished Addison; the sarcastic Steele; the ingenious Farquhar; the complacent Rowe; the methodical Bickerstaff; the incomparable Goldsmith; and the industrious trio, O'Kelly, O'Keete, and Reynolds —who, in various pairings, were escorting, in all their own special beauty and glory of powder, patches, diamonds, bodices, frills, hooped petticoats and dainty footgear, Mesdames Bracegirdle, the enrapturing; Verbrugger, the coquettish; Oldfield, the queenlike; 'Polly-Peacham'-Fenton; Bellamy, the bewitching; Peg Woffington, the idol; 'Kitty' Clive, the

entrancing; Pritchard, the capturing; Susanna Cibber, the capricious; Abington, the quick winner of applause; and Siddons, the peerless.

"Mingling in another throng, apart from the others, I seemed also to catch glimpses, amid the ghostly visitants of the rooms of French *père*, but clad in the more modernizings of costumes and dress, the erratic George Frederick Cooke; laughing Jack Bannister; the majestic Kembles; the seductive Mrs. Jordan; the volatile Edwin; Kean, the terrible; and Kean, the conservative, with his sweet Ellen Tree; the majestic Mayne Young; 'that paragon of a Wallack;' the eccentric Elliston; the mimetic Matthewses; Munden, the droll; Emery, the buoyant; Liston, the mirth-provoker; Miss Foote, the graceful; Miss O'Neill, the beautiful; Miss Kelley, the beguiler; Mrs. Glover, Mrs. Nesbitt, and Madame Vestris, the three dramatic Graces; Macready, the conscientious; Booth, the unreliable; Brooke, the hapless; Phelps, of Shakesperean lore; Sheridan Knowles, the constructor; Lemon, and Jerrold, and Talfourd, and Lytton (whom word-painting cannot justly reach); Buckstone, the unctuous; Webster, the master of stage 'business;' Bunn, the conceited; Balfe, the tender; Tom Taylor, the fertile; Planché, the enthusiast; A'Becket, the professor of theatric *badinage;* and Harry Montague, the true, the gentle, and the early lost. . . . ."

I find that I have made a mistake, and hasten to rectify my error; and I am all the more ready to do so when I find that I have unintentionally done an act of injustice to a very clever young actor at the Haymarket Theatre—Mr. Charles Brookfield. During the recent performance of "Caste," by Mr. Robertson, I thought I detected one or two interpolations in the original text, but I foolishly selected the wrong instance for comment. I find that Mr. Brookfield was only speaking the correct text when he talked of old Eccles "bluing" the money that had been given to his daughter. The exact words of the text are—

> "George. So, papa, Eccles had the money?
> Sam. And 'blued' it!"

So here are my apologies to Mr. Brookfield, who is naturally as averse to "gag" as any actor possibly can be. At any rate, he should not be accused of "gagging" when he does not indulge in the baneful practice, should he?

The old complaint that theatrical managers will never give themselves the trouble to read any of the numerous manuscripts sent in to them by unknown authors is perpetually cropping up. In some cases there may be a foundation for such an accusation, certainly. But in general it must be said, at the present day, there is no ground for it whatever. Many managers, spite of their numerous wearying and absorbing avocations, do their best to give attention to the enormous piles of manuscript papers heaped on their poor responsible heads. It is grievous, under such circumstances, to have dinned into their ears the cuckoo cry, "They manage these matters better in France." Do they? The following anecdote,

cited among a thousand other instances, goes some way to controvert the assertion.

Monsieur Rocqueplan, when manager of the Variétés Theatre in Paris, was notorious for his persistent refusal to hold any communication with any dramatic author whomsoever. Every precaution was used in his theatre to keep dramatic authors from entering his managerial sanctum. Liraudin, a well-known *vaudevilliste*, better known still as a celebrated *confiseur*, resolved, by some means or other, to break through the ban. After endeavouring in vain to obtain legitimate access to the manager, he was wandering in the small court-yard behind the theatre, when he became aware of a ladder which was placed against the wall close by the windows of the managerial room. A bricklayer, hod on back, was about to mount it. Liraudin, with a heavy bribe, offered to take his place whilst he went to refresh himself at the nearest *cabaret*. The workman consented; and the dramatic author, with the hod on his shoulders, ascended to the manager's window, manuscript in hand. Taken aback by this sudden apparition, Monsieur Rocqueplan consented to submit to a reading of the manuscript, provided the author remained on the ladder outside, still supporting his burden on his back. Liraudin had not read far, however, when the inaccessible manager begged him to clamber in at the window and finish his reading in the room. By his eccentric persistence, Liraudin obtained the acceptance of his piece, "La Vendetta," which achieved an enormous success at the Théâtre des Variétés, and has been equally fortunate on the English stage, where it is known as "A Thumping Legacy" to this day; after having been rendered famous by the acting of Keeley and Robson, it has become a staple farce in many English theatres.

Miss Elaine Verner gave a costume recital at the Steinway Hall on January 31, and displayed much dramatic power in the potion scene from "Romeo and Juliet." Her Rosalind in some scenes from "As You Like It" was very graceful and pleasing, and in several other selections Miss Elaine Verner proved that she possessed much dramatic power.

York, we believe, is the only town in England where an Easter pantomime is a recognized institution, and, if we remember rightly, the fare usually served up elsewhere at Christmas has always in that city been presented at Easter, where it is as greatly relished as at the more orthodox season. Mr. Victor Stevens once more is to be solely responsible for this year's production, and has secured the services of a first-rate company, which is headed by that sprightly burlesque actress, Miss Nellie Bouverie, who will play the title *rôle* of Dick Whittington.

My predictions have proved true, and Mrs. Bernard-Beere has been selected to play "Fédora" in Mr. Herman Merivale's version of the play already in preparation at the Haymarket. This lady's performance in "Jane Eyre" quite justifies the choice, and she has now an opportunity

before her such as falls to few ambitious artists. It is an arduous task, but one that is looked on favourably by all who have watched the lady's career, and her unrivalled determination to succeed. In order to recover her strength, and forget the anxieties of management, Mrs. Beere has gone abroad, through Paris, to the south of France. She will thus be enabled to visit her friend Sara Bernhardt, to sit at the feet of Sardou, and to study Fédora under the orange-trees of Nice. An enviable holiday!

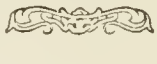
The brilliant success of "The Silver King" at London and New York has now been followed by a triumph equally noteworthy in the English provinces. This admirable, well-written, and poetical drama by Mr. H. A. Jones and Mr. Herman has been produced at Hull under the most favourable circumstances, and the local papers are loud in their praises of the Wilfrid Denver of Mr. E. H. Brooke, who thrilled the audience in that noble description of the murderer's dream; of the Skinner of Mr. R. S. Boleyn; and of the Mrs. Denver of Miss Cissy Grahame, a clever and charming little actress, who is distinguishing herself in emotional characters. On the principle that "good wine needs no bush," I suppose little more need be said about "The Silver King," but provincial audiences have a treat in store for them wherever it is produced. It is more than a drama. It is a romance of every-day interest, written by men of taste and poetical feeling.

Miss Mary Dickens, clever daughter of a clever father, has not been long in securing an engagement. She is now playing the pretty little "maid of the inn," in the second act of "The Silver King" at the Princess's Theatre, and playing the part remarkably well into the bargain.

We have no club in London answering precisely to the German Athenæum in Mortimer Street. We get very near to it, but have not quite hit upon the "happy thought" of combining that special flavour of culture with conversation and fun. Every musician, painter, and dramatist of fame is made welcome by his brethren at the German Athenæum, where they do more, much more, than talk and smoke. Their concerts and conversazione are the most brilliant things of the kind to be found in London, and when they have nothing better to do they give scientific and literary lectures, and set themes to be illustrated by members learned in the fine arts. Thus a given subject such as "A Flood," would be rendered in painting, in poetry, in music, and in sculpture. However, "dulce est desipere in loco," and the other evening after a brilliant concert and a series of tableaux arranged by Alma Tadema, R.A., at the St. George's Hall, in aid of the German Inundation Fund, the members of the Athenæum invited H.R.H. the Prince of Wales to the cosy club in Mortimer Street, together with several distinguished guests, to see a capital

bit of fun on the miniature stage of the club. This turned out to be a most amusing parody of the Belt trial, and kept hundreds of clever men in roars of laughter. The leading spirit of the parody, and one of the most popular members of the club, is Franz Goedecker, one of the very ablest of living caricaturists, who astonished the company by modelling a head of Bismarck and another of Sir Julius Benedict in five minutes, before the audience and without any assistance but his fingers and thumbs. The Judge of Herr Max Hecht was another admirable bit of fooling. After the play Mr. Goedecker sang a Schnitzel-bank—a kind of German "House that Jack built,"—to his own inimitable caricatures. It was an evening long to be remembered.

Mr. A. W. Dubourg, the well-known dramatic author, has done well to publish "Four Original Plays" (Richard Bentley & Son, New Burlington Street). The student of dramatic literature will be amused and interested; the far-seeing critic will be able to see for himself some of the causes that hinder the immediate acceptance of original work, even from a practised hand. Mr. A. W. Dubourg is an earnest and cultured writer, who very sensibly puts purpose and heart into his work. He feels what he writes, and, like most men who feel strongly, he may be inclined to be harsh upon mere business men for not feeling his own enthusiasm. It is quite true that the public is ready to receive and welcome good and original work, and that, so far as recent experience goes, a deaf ear has never been turned to any play that has fairly fulfilled the conditions that the stage requires. But original authors with heart and enthusiasm go a little too far when they believe that the mere fact of originality blinds any audience to little errors in judgment that are far more pronounced in representation than on paper. The public wants a good play, and does not care one straw from what source it is taken. It may be derived from Sanscrit, Spanish, French, German, or the Dutch languages. It must please, and not offend. Mr. Tennyson or Mr. Browning are no more free from the "scorn of scorn" if an audience does not take to their idea, than the humblest dramatist from the East-end. In all Mr. Dubourg's plays there are excellent ideas; they are sensible, well written, and dramatic; but it does not at all follow that they could be all played as written, or that the practical stage-manager would not ruthlessly condemn some of the favourite ideas of the author. For instance, in the very first play, "Green Cloth, a Story of Monte Carlo," I very much doubt if any audience would understand Miss Lindsay of Balham, the *Dea ex machinâ*, who is a kind of clever and comic missionary involved in the serious interest, and prone to deliver tracts on the slightest provocation. Nor would they exercise their minds in thinking about the subtlety of such a character as Mrs. Verney. Audiences are like children—they want simple food, not involved sketches of character. "Art and Love" is a charming little work, that could be acted and appreciated everywhere. Now that good plays are read as literature as well as acted on the stage, Mr. Dubourg's book will be a valuable addition to the dramatic library.



THE THEATRE.

April, 1883.

Wallis Court.

PART I.

WALLIS COURT is about five miles from one of the largest towns in the north-west of England. It is a fine old manorial house, and from the windows of the countless chambers the view is so extensive, that although I have lived there for twenty years without a break, I always declare that I saw new points and effects every time I gazed at it.

Here I have been ever since I was two years old. My mother died the day after I was born, and my father joined her two years after, leaving me to the care of my Aunt Wallis, of Wallis Court, his only sister.

My father was a Frenchman of very ancient family; my mother a Miss Wallis, brother and sister having married brother and sister. Colonel Wallis had married my aunt when she was but seventeen years old, and three months after the wedding had disappeared from Europe with an American actress. He was never heard of again; he had made his arrangements about Wallis Court, leaving it to Aunt Belle, with two thousand a year, giving her power to leave it to whom she liked, with only one condition, that it was not to be left to churches, convents, or priests: she was a strict Roman Catholic. He was not very much of anything, but had been baptized in the Church of England. She never knew exactly when he died, and he never knew that eight months after he left her she gave birth to a son. She made up her mind that this boy should be brought up for and devoted to the Church, and with this object always in view, he was sent to a Catholic College abroad, as she thought there was less chance

of his getting any heretical ideas in his head if brought up in a Catholic country; and in Belgium he spent his youth. However, his father's military instincts came out strongly when he was about eighteen, and when he came over to Wallis Court, he asked his mother to buy him a commission in the English army. This she refused to do. Angry words passed between them: he declared that he would be a soldier like his father, grandfather, and all the Wallises; and she, in her wrath, said his father had disgraced them. The boy had never before heard her speak a word against the man who had so cruelly deserted her, and had always loved the handsome looking soldier, whose portrait hung over the prie-dieu in her boudoir.

The next day Maurice left Wallis Court, as he averred, for ever, and shortly after enlisted in the French army. Two years after I came, and my dear old aunt lavished all her love and affection on me. She was a very beautiful woman, as good and kind as possible. With her and a governess I passed all my happy childhood. They were both highly accomplished women; my aunt painted well, my governess was a perfect musician, and both were good linguists, and they took a pride in trying to make me as clever as themselves. We had no visitors but the Fathers who used to come over from Westville to do the service in our chapel, as Aunt Belle never went out of the grounds.

Miss Marchmont, my governess, had relations living on the other side of the town, and we sometimes drove over to see them. Her brother was a wealthy merchant, with an only daughter, about my age. Aunt Belle was so afraid that I should meet any gentlemen there, and perhaps end by making an unfortunate marriage like hers, that my visits there were very rare. I used to tell her that if she ever intended me to marry, it would only be with a Frenchman of ancient lineage, with half a dozen long names to match mine, and who would suddenly be seen walking up the steps of Wallis Court, hat in hand, to demand an alliance with her niece, Mademoiselle Pauline Stephanie Angelique Marie Montgivon de Belancourt.

One evening in December, Miss Marchmont was taken suddenly ill, and alarmingly so. Poor Aunt Belle became flurried. She wanted the doctor, one of the Fathers, and Mr. Marchmont all at once. Our household consisted of an old coachman, who had lived with Aunt Belle ever since her marriage, and was now

nearly seventy, and asthmatical, but who always drove us, as we never had occasion to go out if the weather were bad. Under him was Watson, a young man about twenty-five, who did all the hard work, and sometimes drove a small cart, when he had to fetch such things as washing or hampers of stores, and sometimes a dog-cart; besides Watson, there was a small boy of thirteen. Our stud consisted of two handsome, large and lazy carriage horses, sleek and sleepy, one that went in the dog-cart and was ridden by Watson when he rode out with me, and my particular steed.

On the evening of Miss Marchmont's indisposition, old Grant was laid up with bronchitis; Watson had gone to London to attend his father's funeral, and the boy was the only available Jehu we had. Aunt Belle was in despair. She, and our old maid, Parkins, did not dare leave dear Marchmont's side. I told her not to worry herself. She knew I was a good horsewoman, for she had thought it only right that a Wallis and a Montgivon de Belancourt should be a good *écuyère*, and I had been presented with a pony on my fifth birthday, and a horse when I was sixteen. I told her I would drive the dog-cart and fetch the doctor first, and bring him back, taking the boy with me for propriety. She assented to this arrangement, and I left her somewhat comforted.

The snow had been days on the ground, and the road was rather slippery. Martin, the boy, and I went into Bolter's stables, and between us we managed to harness the horse, and we succeeded in getting him into the dog-cart. He was very fresh, not having been out for some days, and somewhat frisky. For a couple of miles we went along at a pretty good pace. I never took my eyes off Bolter's head and the road until we passed a place called Thornton Pool, on which hundreds of skaters were disporting themselves. I always envied them, and longed to join them; but such a proceeding would have so shocked Aunt Belle that I never even dared suggest it, and contented myself with gyrations on our own pond, with Martin, Watson, and Grant for an admiring crowd.

The scene was very picturesque, and I forgot Bolter in order to gaze at it. He took a mean advantage of my weakness, and showed signs of becoming unmanageable. There was nothing in front of us but this long white road, and one solitary figure of a man, some-

what ahead. As we neared him, I could just see that he had a pair of skates slung on his shoulder. Then Bolter became fearfully obstreperous, Martin became alarmed, and the man turned round and saw us. He made one plunge at the horse's head just in time to prevent a catastrophe. This had not come within Bolter's calculation, and he suddenly stood quite still. The stranger looked at me and lifted his hat, and then looked at Martin, and at the trap and horse, without saying one word. I was gazing at him. It then struck me that he had done a very courageous thing, and I thanked him for it, and said I thought the horse was all right now, and that I had better go on.

"Will you allow me to accompany you a little way, in case he becomes troublesome again?" asked the stranger.

I looked at him for a minute without answering. Such an offer had never occurred to me. He saw that I hesitated, and said—

"You will be conferring a great kindness on me, for I have an important appointment, and fear I am rather late. I hoped I should meet some trap coming along, when I perceived yours, and meant to ask for a lift."

After this a refusal was impossible.

"Very well," said I, rather ungraciously, and he tried to jump up, but Bolter began to be restless again, and this was not so easily accomplished. He, the stranger, danced about the road, with one foot on the step, and the other in the snow, and I felt inclined to give vent to an almost uncontrollable fit of laughter, but I thought he might be offended; and at last, seizing a propitious moment, I held out my hand to him, instinctively, and he landed at last by my side. Martin scrambled up behind again, and off we went. Not a word passed between us for some time. The horse became very restive again, and seemed determined either to run away or tumble down. Quiet driving along the road did not seem to fit his present excitable state.

"I don't think you can manage a brute like that," said my companion; "let me take the reins."

"He will be all right presently," said I, laconically.

"No he won't," said he, just as Bolter made another start, and without another word he took the reins gently out of my hands. "Whip," he added. I handed it to him without a word. "Hold on," he then said, and he lashed and thrashed the horse until his arm must have ached. Bolter, after recovering from his astonish-

ment, became perfectly quiet, and we drove on silently. "Where shall I drive to?" said my new friend, when we reached the town.

"I am going for a doctor," said I; "I can manage him now, and I should not like you to miss your appointment through me."

He took out his watch quickly, gave a sort of gasp, and exclaiming something about being late, he handed me back the reins, looked hard at my face, put out his hand, which I mechanically took, shook hands with me warmly, lifted his hat and disappeared. I drove on to the doctor's house, and told him that we wanted him at the Court immediately to see Miss Marchmont; he said he was ready to go back with me as soon as Bolter had rested a bit.

The journey home was easy enough: Bolter was subdued. I told the doctor all I could about Miss Marchmont, and then we lapsed into silence. I must own that I was preoccupied all the time with thinking of the strange companion I had picked up, and I wondered, nay hoped, I should see him again. Dr. Mathews remained all night. Miss Marchmont recovered in a few weeks, and all went smoothly again as before. I tried the effect of asking if I might go once to Thornton Pool, not thinking for one moment that my wish would be granted; and, to my astonishment Aunt Belle allowed Miss Marchmont to persuade her to give her consent, and to my great delight Parkins, our antiquated maid, and I drove off together, and arranged to walk back. I owned that I wished to see my friend again, but if he were on the ice the chances were against my seeing him, as it was very full.

I skated away for some time, feeling very charmed at being among a lot of people for the first time in my life, and feeling very independent. It was just beginning to get dusk, and many skaters had left the ice. I was now better able to skim along at a swift pace, and was racing round the edge of the pool when I heard a shout behind me, and in a moment a figure had dashed up to me, seized me by the hand, and made me whirl round in a different direction. We stopped as soon as it was possible, and my friend—for it was he—let go my hand, and lifting his hat, said—

"What a very reckless person you are, to be sure!"

I was panting and astonished, and could not speak at once.

"Did you not see," said he, "that you were skating straight away on to forbidden ice, and that another moment and you would have gone in?"

This, of course, I had not known; it shocked me a good deal, and I began to tremble, and felt myself turn pale.

"Come along with me," said my companion, "you must sit down now for a little;" and he led me to a chair near the bank. Without saying a word, he knelt down and took off my skates; then he made me get up again, and led me into a tent, where he made me drink a cup of hot tea. He asked me if I was there alone, and on my telling him that I had my maid with me, and that I had left her in a little tent on the other side of the pool, he said he would take me to her.

We started off together, and after about two minutes had passed, he took out his watch, and gasped more perceptibly than on the first occasion, and saying, "By Jove, I can't," he lifted his hat and disappeared. I did not feel hurt at being so suddenly abandoned, for he did it in a kind and regretful, though spasmodic, way. I found Parkins, but did not say anything about my nearly meeting with an icy bath, nor did I mention him.

The frost lasted nearly another week, and Aunt Belle allowed me to go every day. Every afternoon I found my friend on the ice; we skated together, which, I suppose, was very improper. I did not know what to do about him at home. I had not the courage now to tell Aunt Belle or Miss Marchmont anything on the subject, nor could I give up the pleasure it gave me to see him now and then. I used to meet him on horseback, quite by accident in a way, for we had never arranged to meet. Neither Watson nor Martin could ever have made any remark about this to any of the other servants, or I should have heard of it. He never made love to me, from what I could judge of love-making in books I had read; but I think he loved me, and I know I loved him. I knew nothing about him beyond the fact that he was very handsome, very amusing, and that his manners were charming and always respectful. And so I "lived in fantasy," and imagined him to be all sorts of things, *but the right one*.

Part II.

The spring came, and seemed to gladden me as it had never done before. I had only one care to cloud an existence that was to me paradise on earth, and that was a feeling of shame and remorse

that I had not the courage to tell Aunt Belle or Miss Marchmont of my friendship and occasional meetings with "Thornton Pool," as I called him—after his own suggestion. It seems strange to me now, that I never inquired after his real name, but I never thought of him as anything in the future. He was to me a present enjoyment. When I met him, and we rode together, the air seemed lighter, the sun brighter, and life unspeakably beautiful. It never occurred to me that some day he might go away and disappear for ever. On the days that I did not meet him, I certainly felt a curious sensation of *nothingness*, and my ride seemed a sort of failure somehow; and I would walk my horse home mechanically, enter by the stable-way, and leave him without the usual pat and cuddle; and I would go up the back stairs to my room, telling Parkins, as I passed her, that I should not want her. When I had met him, everything seemed so different. The air appeared fresher, the sky more blue, and the sun more enjoyable.

We always parted at the end of a lane which we christened "Good-bye Corner," he taking the road that led to town, and I the opposite one home; on those occasions I cantered back contentedly, riding up to the front door, where I generally found Aunt Belle and Miss Marchmont sitting out on a bench. There I would sit with them for a little time playing with the dogs and a pet parrot, before going in to change my dress, and listen with amiable interest to what Father so-and-so had said when he had called in the afternoon, and with philanthropic delight on hearing that our laundry-maid's whitlow had been lanced and that the operation in question would ensure her a better night's rest.

One afternoon—it was the last day in May—we were riding along the ridge of one of our mountains, when the sky, which had hitherto been glowing, became clouded and a heavy darkness seemed to envelop us. We stopped our horses and gazed beneath us on the valley which stretched below. "Thornton Pool" had not been quite himself that day. He was not so talkative, and not at all entertaining.

After several minutes' silence he said—

"I am going away to-morrow." He took out his watch, and studied it for a minute, then replacing it in his waistcoat pocket, and pointing with his whip across the valley to a distant point, said, "Yonder is Good-bye Corner; I have a great wish to accom-

pany you there, but it must be done in three-quarters of an hour. Can you do it?"

I looked on the spot he was pointing to and then at him, and said, "Yes," as I turned my horse round. The rain came down in large drops, and the whole scene became darkened, as we came down the mountain-side without a word. When we got on the level, we put our horses at a gallop, and tore along the high road under the lowering clouds without a word. We pulled in at the bottom of a hill which led up to "Good-bye Corner;" the rain was coming down in torrents, and we were soaked through. He took out his watch, gave one of his now well-known gasps, and saying—

"I cannot carry out my wish. I cannot go any farther." He held out his hand to me, and adding, after a pause, "Good-bye," he raised his hat, turned his horse, and galloped at full speed back towards the town. I watched him until he was out of sight, and although I did not then realize the situation, I felt a sense of chill and coming sorrow, and rode home dejectedly, with the rain beating hard enough against my face to wash away the unconscious tears that rose up from my heart and gathered to my eyes. I hardly knew why.

The whole summer passed hotly away, and I never saw him again. I rode across all the old ground we had galloped over together, until the sun and the trees and the birds and the air became hateful; and in the autumn I got ill, but no name could be given to my ailment. I could not sleep or eat properly, and everything ceased to amuse or interest me, although I tried to fight against this feeling for the sake of my aunt and governess. At last December came, and the doctor having suggested that a little change was absolutely necessary, Aunt Belle consented to my going to stay with the Marchmonts for a week or a fortnight. I was glad of this, for I felt wearied by the very sight of the view I had once loved so much, but which now seemed to me irksomely monotonous.

The Marchmonts were kindness itself, and the complete change from a monastic life to a comparatively gay one did me good. I had no time to think. We were continually employed in shopping, driving, calling, dinner-parties, and actually a dance! I saw many young men for the first time in my life, but felt so unaccustomed to them that I hardly dared answer them when they spoke to me, and certainly never ventured to address them; so I must have made

a most unfavourable impression on them. One afternoon, Mr. Marchmont came home rather earlier than usual, joining us at our afternoon tea.

"We must dine a little earlier to-night, Marion," said he, addressing his wife; "I have got a box for the play, and we are going to see Moreton Temple, in 'The Lady of Lyons.'"

"Oh! papa, what a dear you are!" exclaimed Ethel Marchmont, enthusiastically. "Think of that, Pauline!"

But I was not up in theatricals, never having been inside a theatre in my life, and Moreton Temple conveyed nothing to my mind worth an emotion. I knew perfectly well that Aunt Belle would not have consented to my going to a theatre, and so I said—

"You must all go, and tell me all about it when you come home."

Mr. Marchmont looked discouraged.

"My dear Pauline," he said, "I shall not go without you. There is no harm whatever in your seeing this play, and I will take all the blame on my shoulders." After a little more hesitation on my part, I consented. And so we dined rather earlier, and drove off to the play. I was certainly pleased that I was going, and the crowd of carriages and people in front of the theatre looked promising. It was altogether a novelty that pleased me not a little. There was an air of pleasure about all the people as they came trooping in that seemed to make one feel something enjoyable was coming. The band was playing a lovely overture. We had a box on the first tier, next the stage. The curtain went up, and the play began. I was a little disappointed with the beginning, and so I watched the audience, who interested me very much by their silent attention; when all of a sudden their quiet demeanour gave way and a burst of simultaneous applause caused me to look at the stage again. A man was standing in the middle of it, with his head slightly bent in acknowledgment of the vociferous applause. His face was deadly pale, but not more so than mine when, as he lifted his eyes to our box, and our eyes met, I recognized "Thornton Pool." It was all so sudden and so extraordinary to me, that I could hardly realize it; I felt the whole place swim round, but I never moved. The people were still applauding, he was still bowing, and no one could possibly see or know what I felt; this comforted me so that my emotion passed unnoticed by my companions.

The play went on; all through Claude Melnotte's passionate love-making my mind, eyes, and heart were riveted in a way I can hardly express. I felt that his voice was addressing me, although he never looked up again until just before the curtain fell on the last act, and our eyes met again. The curtain went up twice: he came forward to answer the call made for him, and as it went down the last time, and shut him out, as I thought, from my view and my life, I felt I loved him above all things in this world.

I drove home in a daze. They all praised Moreton Temple, who, I discovered, had made a sensation in London some five years ago, and was the most popular actor of the day. They gave him a wife and a few children, from hearsay; they quarrelled about his exact nationality and parentage, while I was silently listening in the corner of the carriage, and accounting to myself now for his jerky disappearances in our past rides. As seven o'clock drew near he was due at the theatre. We had frequently talked about theatres, and I had told him of Aunt Belle's horror of them, and had hinted that the sorrow of her life had been caused by a person connected with the stage. I now felt that all these conversations would come back to him, and that we should never meet again. I rode over our favourite haunts in the hope of seeing him, but unsuccessfully. Was it really true that he was married? Why should he not be? He had never made love to me. Somehow, I know not why, I felt that he had no tie of that kind. He did not remain very long in Westville, but went back to London, where I followed him in imagination, and read all about him in the papers.

Some months passed wearily away, when this time it was Aunt Belle who was taken seriously ill. The doctors did not give us any hope of her being able to recover, although she did not appear to be so bad as they stated her to be. Her mind seemed very uneasy, and she gave me the idea of wanting to say something, but was continually checking herself. I was very miserable at the possibility of losing her, and more so that I had hidden anything from her. Should I tell her? Tell her what? That I had picked up a chance acquaintance, had fallen in love with him, and that he was an actor? No. I felt I could not. It sounded so bad, and yet it was so simple; but it would make her last moments wretched, and I would give all in my power to let her pass away happily, as far as it was in my power to do so, in

return for her life of devotion to me. So I kept my secret, and tried—but how vainly!—to forget him for her.

Weeks passed away without any visible change taking place in Aunt Belle's condition, and the doctor said that though the end was not far off, she might linger on for some months. Miss Marchmont was going to be married, and had wished me very much to be her bridesmaid. I had told her that I was afraid of leaving Aunt Belle for a day even, in case anything should happen while I was away, and I had quite settled in my mind that I would not leave her; when, to my surprise, she herself wished me very much to go, and pressed me to remain there a few days. As I never argued any point with her for fear of wearying her, I accepted the invitation, but reluctantly, and feeling altogether too much out of spirits to be a guest at any festivity. Aunt Belle was evidently getting fidgety about my departure, and made me feel, though without expressing it, that it would be a relief to her to know I had started. I fancied that she thought the change would do me good, and that in her usual unselfish way she was afraid something might occur to prevent me from having what she considered some amusement; so bidding her an affectionate farewell, and saying I should not be away more than three days, I departed, with a sad and heavy heart. I arrived at the Marchmonts the day before the wedding, and found them all very merry and very busy.

The next morning we were all up early, a flood of sunshine awaking us betimes. There was not a hitch of any sort in any of the arrangements of this genial household, but I had received a letter from Aunt Belle which nearly broke my heart, though I had to hide my feelings so as not to jar on the festivities around me. It must have been written very hurriedly, and ran as follows:—

"My darling Child,—I wished you to go away for a little time, that I might write what I dared not tell you; and I must do so as briefly as possible, as I feel I cannot last very long now. I thought it right to let my son know I was dying, and felt I would like to see him once again. I got my lawyer to find out where he was, to write to him and tell him of my wish to see him; also to acquaint him with the fact that I could not now alter my will, as I had made it in your favour and could not now retract. I soon received an answer from him, as follows:—

"'My dearest Mother,—I am very glad that you have at last recalled me, and am very grieved that you are so ill that I may not have the hope of seeing as much of you as my heart desires. My life has been a hard struggle for many years, but now at last I can manage to live without the patrimony and fortune I was entitled to. I do not grieve at your having left it to my cousin, but if you will consent to my marrying her, and I can win her love, I shall have nothing to regret but the years I have been estranged from you. I shall be at Wallis Court on the 17th of July.

"'Your affectionate son,

"'Maurice Wallis.'

"For months, my darling, I have been worrying myself about you and him. I felt, as my end was approaching, that I had not behaved well to him, and I knew I could not restore what was his by right, without altering the will I had made in your favour. When his letter came, a new hope dawned for me, and I grasped it with a gratitude I cannot express. By marrying you, Maurice would regain his own property without depriving you of it. This thought has given me new life, or rather has softened the pangs of death. You, my darling, have never loved any one before, and cannot fail to love my handsome son. I wrote back and told him that his marriage with you would gladden my last moments. Oh! Pauline, come back after the wedding, and let me join your hands and his before I die. This unexpected emotion is killing me fast, although it makes me so supremely happy. To-morrow evening I will send Mat with the horses, that you may come back quickly. God bless you, my child—my daughter.

"Your loving aunt,

"Belle Wallis."

I was perfectly dismayed at the contents of this letter. What could I do? Refuse Aunt Belle's dying wish, after her devotion to me, or marry a man I had never seen, and could never love? I don't know how I put on my bridesmaid's dress. I felt in a dream—a nightmare. As we drove to church I resolved in my mind to accept him for Aunt Belle's sake, and then when my poor dear aunt was laid in her grave, I would tell him I loved another man, and could not marry him, but would return him all his property. I had not time to consider whether this was wrong or

not, for I sat next a chatty groomsman, and had to try and talk while my thoughts were elsewhere.

The ceremony took place, the sun shining on the happiest couple I have ever seen. As I thought of my own position, I thought I should have broken down; but there was one thing I always could do—suffer, and make no sign. The wedding breakfast was like all others, I suppose, and would have delighted me as a novelty, had my mind been at peace. The bride changed her dress, and left in the summer afternoon, looking the picture of happiness. I had not said a word to her about having to leave directly she was gone. I had behaved just like the other bridesmaids, and had not shrieked, as I felt inclined to, when I overheard my groomsman tell my neighbour that he had seen the celebrated actor, Moreton Temple, in Westville the previous evening. As he was not acting there now, I thought he must be mistaken; but I said nothing. When the bride had departed, I told Mrs. Marchmont that I had had a letter from Aunt Belle in the morning, saying I must return at once as she was feeling worse. At seven o'clock the horses came, brought by our new groom, Watson having left us to get married. The man had a note for me, which I hurriedly opened. It was from Maurice, and ran as follows:—

"My dear Cousin,—My meeting with my mother seems to have been almost more than she could bear, and I am afraid it is now a question of hours. I tell you this to prepare you, as I do not think, from what others tell me, her end was supposed to be so near.—Yours faithfully,

"Maurice Wallis."

I got into my habit as quickly as possible, and my only thought was to get to her and bid her good-bye, although as I tore along the road on that hot summer evening the thought flashed across me that, if I arrived too late, I should be spared a promise I could not keep. I would have sacrificed anything to be able to kiss my dear good aunt before she died. It was getting dark when I reached Wallis Court. I jumped off my horse and ran lightly upstairs to her bedroom. Parkins was waiting outside, crying bitterly.

"She is not——" was all I could utter.

"No, Miss, but she cannot last the night."

I gently turned the handle of the door, and went softly in. Miss Marchmont and a man were standing on the other side of the bed. I could not see much, for the sun had just gone down, and my eyes were full of tears as I bent over Aunt Belle and put my arms round her and kissed her. She was very feeble, but had not lost consciousness.

"I knew you would come, darling, and I know you will consent to what I asked . . . . you . . . . in . . . . letter . . . . Maurice, give me your hand . . . . from Pauline . . . . my darling children . . . . you have made me very . . . . happy. God bless you."

With my head buried on her shoulder and my hand firmly grasped by my cousin, I felt my poor dear aunt pass away. We did not move for some time. The doctor came softly in, and looked at her. "It is all over, Wallis; take your cousin away."

It was almost dark now; my cousin came round to my side, and taking me gently but firmly in his arms, carried me to the open window in Aunt Belle's dressing-room, then wiping my face with his handkerchief he murmured softly—

"My love, my wife!" and as I looked up at him, I saw I was in the arms of Moreton Temple!

Mrs. Kendal.

MRS. W. H. KENDAL (Miss Madge Robertson) was born at Great Grimsby, on March 15, 1848, and was brought up to the stage from early childhood. When only four years old (1852) she appeared at the Marylebone Theatre as the Blind Child in "The Seven Poor Travellers." In 1855 she played Eva in a dramatic version of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" at Bristol. Mrs. Kendal passed her early life in the provinces, principally at the Theatres Royal Bristol and Bath, under the management of the late Mr. J. H. Chute. She made her first professional appearance in London on Saturday, July 29, 1865, at the Haymarket Theatre, as Ophelia to the Hamlet of the late Walter Montgomery. On August 21, of the same year and at the same theatre, she played Desdemona, Othello being represented by Ira Aldridge. Miss Robertson then fulfilled engagements at Notting-

MRS. KENDAL.

'A woman! a wretched woman!'

—UNCLE'S WILL.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN SPECIALLY FOR 'THE THEATRE' BY THE ST. JAMES'S PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPANY, 72, PICCADILLY, W.

ham and Hull. Returning to London, she acted Edith in the first performance of Andrew Halliday's drama, "The Great City," at Drury Lane, on Easter Monday, 1867. On March 14 of the following year, she acted Blanche Dumont in Dr. Westland Marston's play, "A Hero of Romance," then first performed at the Haymarket Theatre. In July, at the same theatre, she sustained the character of Hypolita in Colley Cibber's comedy, "She Would and She Would Not." On Monday, December 21, 1868, at the opening of the Gaiety Theatre, she appeared in "On the Cards." In March, 1869, also at the Gaiety Theatre, she played Lady Clara Vere de Vere in "Dreams." At the Haymarket Theatre, on October 25 of the same year, she represented Lilian Vavasour in the first performance of Messrs. Tom Taylor and A. W. Dubourg's comedy, "New Men and Old Acres." In a revival of "The Rivals," at the same theatre, on October 24, 1870, she played Lydia Languish; and on November 19 of the same year, also at the Haymarket Theatre, she acted Princess Zeolide in the first performance of Mr. W. S. Gilbert's play, "The Palace of Truth." She also acted the following parts in the same author's plays at the Haymarket Theatre:—Galatea, in "Pygmalion and Galatea," on December 9, 1871; Selene, in "The Wicked World," on January 4, 1873; and Mrs. Van Brugh, in "Charity," on January 3, 1874. On January 18, 1875, Miss Robertson commenced a short engagement at the Opera Comique, where she acted Pauline in "The Lady of Lyons," Rosalind in "As You Like It," and Miss Hardcastle in "She Stoops to Conquer." In March, 1875, she joined the company of Mr. Hare, at the Court Theatre, and during the season she played there in "Lady Flora," "Broken Hearts," "A Nine Days' Wonder," "A Scrap of Paper," "Uncle's Will," and other pieces. Now married to Mr. W. H. Kendal, this distinguished actress went to the Prince of Wales's Theatre, where she made her greatest success as Dora, in "Diplomacy," the English version of M. Sardou's "Dora," performed for the first time on January 12, 1878. On January 4, 1879, Mr. and Mrs. Kendal opened, at the Court Theatre, in "A Scrap of Paper," Mrs. Kendal resuming her part of Susan Hartley. On February 15 she played the Countess d'Autreval in a revival of "The Ladies' Battle;" and on April 19, Kate Greville in "The Queen's Shilling." At the St. James's Theatre, under the management of Mr. Kendal and Mr.

Hare, Mrs. Kendal acted the Lady Giovanni in "The Falcon," on December 18, 1879; and Mrs. Sternhold, in the revival of "Still Waters Run Deep," on March 13, 1881. On October 9 of the same year, she played Susan, in the first performance of Mr. W. G. Wills' drama, entitled "William and Susan." On December 4 she acted Isabel, in "Good Fortune." On January 8, 1881, she played Millicent Boycott, in "The Money-Spinner." On October 27 following, the date of the re-opening of the St. James's Theatre for the season, Mrs. Kendal undertook the character of Mrs. Pinchbeck, in "Home;" and played Mrs. Preston, in "The Cape Mail." On December 29, 1881, she acted Kate Verity, in "The Squire;" and on December 9, 1882, she impersonated Mrs. Beresford in "Impulse," a play that is likely to rival even "Diplomacy" in public favour. Mrs. Kendal is emphatically the first of the English-speaking and home-loving artists of the age in which she was born. Her art, with all its vigour, with all its tenderness, with all its tears, and with all its humour, is emblematic of her time. No living actress has done more by means of her art to teach men to be true and women to be tender.

Rosalind.

"Am not I your Rosalind?"—*As You Like It*, act iv. sc. 1.

FOOLISH Orlando! not to feel *her* nigh
Whose very step the winking daisies know,—
They murmur "Rosalind" with every sigh
That stirs their petals when the breezes blow,—
Each bird that in the leafy forest flies
Sings of the glory burning in her eyes—
While thou, dull-pated youth and drowsy lover,
Wanderest the wood, unconscious of thy joy,
And lackest eyes within thee to discover
(As birds and flowers have done) the seeming boy.
What! canst not spy beneath the shepherd's vest
The bounteous wave of Rosalind's fair breast?
As boy she kiss'd thee! by that touch divine
Wert still in doubt with *her* sweet lips on thine?

Marie Corelli.

W. S. GILBERT.

'The individual who modelled *you*
Was a beginner, very probably?'
—PYGMALION AND GALATEA.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN SPECIALLY FOR 'THE THEATRE' BY THE ST. JAMES'S PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPANY, 72, PICCADILLY, W.

William Schwenck Gilbert.

An Autobiography.

I HAVE been asked by the editor of this Magazine to give an account of myself. I was born on the 18th of November, 1836, at 17, Southampton Street, Strand. I was educated privately at Great Ealing and at King's College, intending to finish up at Oxford. But in 1855, when I was nineteen years old, the Crimean war was at its height, and commissions in the Royal Artillery were thrown open to competitive examination. So I gave up all idea of Oxford, took my B.A. degree at the University of London, and read for the examination for direct commissions, which was to be held at Christmas, 1856. The limit of age was twenty, and as at the date of examination I should have been six weeks over that age I applied for and obtained from Lord Panmure, the then Secretary of State for War, a dispensation for this excess, and worked away with a will. But the war came to a rather abrupt and unexpected end, and no more officers being required, the examination was indefinitely postponed. Among the blessings of peace may be reckoned certain comedies, operas, farces, and extravaganzas which, if the war had lasted another six weeks, would in all probability never have been written. I had no taste for a line regiment, so I obtained, by competitive examination, an assistant clerkship in the Education Department of the Privy Council Office, in which ill-organized and ill-governed office I spent four uncomfortable years. Coming unexpectedly into possession of a capital sum of £300, I resolved to emancipate myself from the detestable thraldom of this baleful office; and on the happiest day of my life I sent in my resignation. With £100 I paid my call to the Bar (I had previously entered myself as a student at the Inner Temple), with another £100 I obtained access to a conveyancer's chambers; and with the third £100 I furnished a set of chambers of my own, and began life afresh as a barrister-at-law. In the meantime I had made my appearance in print. My very first plunge took place in 1858, I think, in connection with the late Alfred Mellon's Promenade Concerts. Madame Parepa-Rosa (at that time Mdlle. Parepa), whom I had known from babyhood, had made a singular success at those concerts with the laughing-song from

"Manon Lescaut," and she asked me to do a translation of the song for Alfred Mellon's play-bill. I did it: it was duly printed in the bill. I remember that I went night after night to those concerts to enjoy the intense gratification of standing at the elbow of any promenader who might be reading my translation, and wondering to myself what that promenader would say if he knew that the gifted creature who had written the very words he was reading was at that moment standing within a yard of him? The secret satisfaction of knowing that I possessed the power to thrill him with this information was enough, and I preserved my *incognito*.

In 1861 *Fun* was started, under the editorship of Mr. H. J. Byron. With much labour I turned out an article three-quarters of a column long, and sent it to the editor, together with a half-page drawing on wood. A day or two later the printer of the paper called upon me, with Mr. Byron's compliments, and staggered me with a request to contribute a column of "copy" and a half-page drawing every week for the term of my natural life. I hardly knew how to treat the offer, for it seemed to me that into that short article I had poured all I knew. I was empty. I had exhausted myself: I didn't know any more. However, the printer encouraged me (with Mr. Byron's compliments), and I said I would try. I did try, and I found to my surprise that there *was* a little left, and enough indeed to enable me to contribute some hundreds of columns to the periodical throughout his editorship, and that of his successor, poor Tom Hood! And here I may mention, for the information and encouragement of disheartened beginners, that I never remembered having completed any drama, comedy, or operatic libretto, without feeling that into that drama, comedy, or operatic libretto, I had poured all that I had, and that there was nothing left. This is a bogey which invariably haunts me, and probably others of my kind, on the completion of every work involving a sustained effort. At first it used to scare me; but I have long learnt to recognize it as a mere bogey, and to treat it with the contempt it deserves.

From time to time I contributed to other magazines, including the *Cornhill*, *London Society*, *Tinsley's*, *Temple Bar*, and *Punch*. I furnished London correspondence to the *Invalide Russe*, and I became the dramatic critic to the now defunct *Illustrated Times*. I also joined the Northern Circuit, and duly attended the London and

Westminster Courts, the Old Bailey, the Manchester and Liverpool Assizes, and Liverpool Sessions and Passage Court. But by this time I was making a very decent income by my contributions to current literature, whereas at the Bar I had only earned £75 in two years. So I stuck to literature, and the Bar went by the board. I was always a clumsy and inefficient speaker, and, moreover, an unconquerable nervousness prevented me from doing justice to myself or my half-dozen unfortunate clients.

Of the many good and staunch friends I made on my introduction into journalism, one of the best and staunchest was poor Tom Robertson, and it is entirely to him that I owe my introduction to stage work. He had been asked by Miss Herbert, the then lessee of St. James's Theatre, if he knew any one who could write a Christmas piece in a fortnight. Robertson, who had often expressed to me his belief that I should succeed as a writer for the stage, advised Miss Herbert to entrust me with the work, and the introduction resulted in my first piece, a burlesque on "L'Elisir d'Amore," called "Dulcamara; or, the Little Duck and the Great Quack." The piece, written in ten days and rehearsed in a week, met with more success than it deserved, owing, mainly, to the late Mr. Frank Matthews' excellent impersonation of the title-r le. In the hurry of production there had been no time to discuss terms, but after it had been successfully launched, Mr. Emden (Miss Herbert's acting manager) asked me how much I wanted for the piece. I modestly hoped that, as the piece was a success, £30 would not be considered an excessive price for the London right. Mr. Emden looked rather surprised, and, as I thought, disappointed. However, he wrote the cheque, asked for a receipt, and when he had got it, said, "Now take a bit of advice from an old stager who knows what he is talking about: never sell so good a piece as this for £30 again." And I never have.

My first piece gave me no sort of anxiety. I had nothing in the matter of dramatic reputation to lose, and I entered my box on the first night of "Dulcamara" with a *cœur leger*. It never entered my mind that the piece would fail, and I even had the audacity to pre-invite a dozen friends to supper after the performance. The piece succeeded (as it happened), and the supper party finished the evening appropriately enough, but I have since

learnt something about the risks inseparable from every "first night," and I would as soon invite friends to supper after a forthcoming amputation at the hip-joint.

Once fairly afloat on the dramatic stream, I managed to keep my head above water. "Dulcamara" was followed by a burlesque on "La Figlia del Reggimento," called "La Vivandière," which was produced at what was then the Queen's Theatre, in Long Acre, and excellently played by Mr. J. L. Toole, Mr. Lionel Brough, Miss Hodson, Miss M. Simpson, Miss Everard (the original Little Buttercup of "H.M.S. Pinafore"), and Miss Fanny Addison. The "Vivandière" ran for 120 nights, and was followed at the Royalty Theatre by the "Merry Zingara," a burlesque on the "Bohemian Girl," in which Miss M. Oliver, Miss Charlotte Saunders, and Mr. F. Dewar appeared. This also ran 120 nights, but it suffered from comparison with Mr. F. C. Burnand's "Black-Eyed Susan," which it immediately followed, and which had achieved the most remarkable success recorded in the annals of burlesque.

Then came the opening of the Gaiety Theatre, for which occasion I wrote "Robert the Devil," a burlesque on the opera of that name, and in which Miss Farren appeared. This was followed by my first comedy, "An Old Score," which, however, made no great mark. But there was a circumstance connected with its production which may serve as a hint to unacted authors. As soon as I had written the piece I had it set up in type—a proceeding that cost me exactly five guineas. I sent a copy of it to Mr. Hollingshead, and within one hour of receiving it he had read and accepted it. He subsequently informed me that he read it at once *because it was printed*. *Verb. sap.*

I wrote several "entertainments" for Mr. German Reed, including "No Cards," "Ages Ago" (in collaboration with Mr. F. Clay), "Our Highland Home," "Happy Arcadia," "A Sensation Novel," and "Eyes and No Eyes"—pieces which have at least this claim upon the gratitude of playgoers, that they served to introduce to the stage Mr. Arthur Cecil, Mr. Corney Grain, Miss Leonora Braham, and Miss Fanny Holland—all of whom made their début in one or other of these little pieces.

I had for some time determined to try the experiment of a blank verse burlesque in which a picturesque story should be told in a strain of mock-heroic seriousness; and through the enterprise of the late Mrs. Liston (then manageress of the Olympic) I was

afforded an opportunity of doing so. The story of Mr. Tennyson's "Princess" supplied the subject-matter of the parody, and I endeavoured so to treat it as to absolve myself from a charge of wilful irreverence. The piece was produced with signal success, owing in no small degree to the admirable earnestness with which Miss M. Reinhardt invested the character of the heroine. Her address to the "girl graduates" remains in my mind as a rare example of faultless declamation. It was unfortunately necessary to cast three ladies for the parts of the three principal youths, and the fact that three ladies were dressed as gentlemen disguised as ladies, imparted an epicene character to their proceedings which rather interfered with the interest of the story. The success of the piece, however, was unquestionable, and it led to a somewhat more ambitious flight in the same direction.

Immediately after the production of the "Princess" I was commissioned by the late Mr. Buckstone to write a blank verse fairy comedy on the story of "Le Palais de la Verité," a subject which had been suggested to me by Mr. Palgrave Simpson. The piece was produced at the Haymarket Theatre with an admirable cast, which included Mr. Buckstone, Mr. Everill, Mrs. Kendal, Miss Caroline Hill, and Miss Fanny Gwynne, and it ran about 150 nights. A day or two before the production of the piece I was surprised to receive a packet containing twenty-four dress circle seats, twenty-four upper-box seats, twenty-four pit seats, and twenty-four gallery seats, for the first night. On inquiry I discovered that by immemorial Haymarket custom these ninety-six seats were the author's nightly perquisites during the entire run of a three-act play. I assured Mr. Buckstone that I had no desire to press my right to this privilege, which seems to be a survival of the old days when authors were paid in part by tickets of admission. I believe that the Haymarket was the only theatre in which the custom existed. Under Mr. Buckstone's conservative management very old fashions lingered on long after they had been abolished at other theatres. I can remember the time (about thirty-eight years since, I think) when it was still lighted by wax candles. The manager of the Haymarket, in Court dress, and carrying two wax candles, ushered Royalty into its box long after other managers had left this function to their deputy, and the old practice of announcing that a new play "would be repeated every night until further notice" survived until the very close of Mr. Buckstone's management.

"Pygmalion and Galatea" followed the "Palace of Truth," and achieved a remarkable success, owing mainly to Mrs. Kendal's admirable impersonation of Galatea. Mr. Buckstone, Mr. Howe, Miss Caroline Hill, and Mrs. Chippendale were the other noteworthy members of the cast. This was followed by "The Wicked World," a fairy comedy in three acts, and "Charity," a modern comedy in four acts, which achieved but an indifferent success in London, although it was played with much credit in the country, under Mr. Wilson Barrett's management.

In the meantime the Court Theatre had been built and opened by Miss Marie Litton. I was commissioned to write the opening comedy, "Randall's Thumb," and its successor, "On Guard." This was followed by a parody on "The Wicked World," called "The Happy Land," with which I had some concern, although it was mainly written by Mr. Gilbert à Beckett. The origin of this piece, which attracted extraordinary attention owing to certain impersonations of three leading statesmen—impersonations which were subsequently forbidden by the Lord Chamberlain—was as follows:—Mrs. Bancroft (at that time lessee of the Prince of Wales's Theatre) had arranged to give a private performance to her personal friends, and she asked me to write a wild burlesque for the occasion. I constructed a political parody on my own piece, "The Wicked World," and incidentally I told the plot to Miss Litton, who expressed a great desire to produce the piece at the Court Theatre, but that was out of the question, as the burlesque was intended for Mrs. Bancroft's private performance. That performance, however, was postponed indefinitely, owing to a domestic affliction, and I then told Miss Litton that the subject of the piece was at her service. Miss Litton gave the plot to Mr. Gilbert à Beckett, who completed it, with some slight assistance from me.

This was followed by an adaptation of "Great Expectations," which achieved no success worth mentioning. It afforded, however, a curious example of the manner in which the Censorship of those days dealt with plays submitted to it for license. It seems that it was the custom of the then Licenser of Plays to look through the MS. of a new piece, and strike out all irreverent words, substituting for them words of an inoffensive character. In "Great Expectations," Magwitch, the returned convict, had to say to Pip, "Here you are, in chambers fit for a Lord." The MS. was

returned to the theatre with the word "Lord" struck out, and "Heaven" substituted, in pencil!

Soon after the production of "Pygmalion and Galatea" I wrote the first of many libretti, in collaboration with Mr. Arthur Sullivan. This was called "Thespis; or, the Gods Grown Old." It was put together in less than three weeks, and was produced at the Gaiety Theatre after a week's rehearsal. It ran eighty nights, but it was a crude and ineffective work, as might be expected, taking into consideration the circumstances of its rapid composition. Our next operetta was "Trial by Jury," which was produced at the Royalty Theatre, under Miss Dolaro's management, with surprising success, due in no slight degree to poor Fred Sullivan's admirable performance of "the Learned Judge." The success of this piece induced Mr. D'Oyly Carte (at that time the managing director of a newly formed "Comedy Opera Company") to commission us to write a two-act opera for the Opéra Comique. "The Sorcerer" was the result of this commission, and it deserves to live in the memory of theatre-goers on account of its having introduced Mr. George Grossmith and Mr. Rutland Barrington to the professional stage. "The Sorcerer" ran for six months, and was followed by "H.M.S. Pinafore," which ran for two years. To this succeeded the "Pirates of Penzance," which ran for a year, and this in turn was followed by "Patience." The success of these pieces induced Mr. D'Oyly Carte to build the Savoy Theatre expressly for them. "Patience" was transferred to the Savoy after having run for six months at the Opéra Comique. It derived new life from its new home, and ran, in all, nineteen months. It is, perhaps, unnecessary to add that its successor, "Iolanthe," is still drawing excellent houses. A new opera is on the stocks, and will probably be produced in October.

I have omitted to record, in their proper places, "Dan'l Druce," and "Engaged," produced at the Haymarket, under Mr. J. S. Clarke's management, and in which Miss Marion Terry made a signal success; "Sweethearts," a two-act comedy produced at the Prince of Wales's under Mrs. Bancroft's management; "Broken Hearts," a three-act play in blank verse, in which Miss Bessie Hollingshead particularly distinguished herself, produced at the Court Theatre, under the management of Mr. Hare; "Tom Cobb," a three-act farcical comedy, produced at the St. James's Theatre, under Miss Litton's management; "Gretchen," a four-act blank

verse play, produced at the Olympic by Mr. Neville; "The Ne'er do Weel," an absolute failure at the Olympic; "Foggerty's Fairy," another failure at the Criterion. I have translated three farces or farcical comedies from the French, and I have adapted two English works, namely, "Great Expectations," and "Ought We to Visit Her?" With these exceptions all the plays I have written are original.

W. S. Gilbert.

Plays in Paris.

With seven new productions awaiting mention at my hands I need scarcely remind you that I have no space for preliminary remarks. Of one thing your readers may be certain—that I shall not be betrayed into extravagant praise because the Parisian critics have been unanimous in pronouncing a work faultless, and that I shall not indulge in indiscriminate censure because they have judged the work to be devoid of any merit whatsoever. These few words are absolutely necessary, because the journalist supposed to have the ear of the English public, and, above all, that of the English managers, is, in the opinion of French playwrights, a personage worth consideration nowadays. This, however, does not lessen their contempt for our artistic perception, or, rather, for our entire want of it; but they are willing to overlook our bad and narrow-minded taste for the sake of our good English gold, and our liberal-handed way of parting with it for their manuscripts.

To this constant eyeing of the main chance may perhaps be ascribed the recent mania of selecting English subjects, and especially historical ones, for scenic and dramatic illustration. "Rotten Row," given a few months ago at the Odéon, and "Le Nouveau Monde," which had a short run at the Theatre des Nations, may be considered as so many attempts to "fetch the British or American impressario." The failure of these attempts may be regarded as a matter of congratulation to the said impressario. You have a dozen playwrights who could do as well, you have at least half a dozen who could do better.

I offer my sincere apologies to the former twelve, whom it would be libelling to suspect of their being able to commit similar gross absurdities in the name of English or other history, or being capable of portraying the social aspects of their own or other nations

under such absurd disguises. Where historical ignorance is the blissful lot of most of your contemporaries, it is presumptuous folly to endeavour to be wiser than they are. This must have been the principle upon which MM. Detroyat and Silvestre composed the libretto to M. Saint Saëns' opera of "Henry VIII." (produced on the 5th of March); for on no other theory can I explain the tissue of anachronisms and almost voluntary blunders of which they have been guilty—both blunders and anachronisms passing unchallenged by the critics, great and small, of the Paris press, with the exception of one, M. Auguste Vitu of the *Figaro*, who, by his supposed rectification, showed himself even more at sea than the librettists.

Fortunately for M. Saint Saëns, and the public also, his masterly score compensates for every shortcoming on the part of his authors. From a nobler motive than that of the miners around Alcester, who drowned the voice of Bishop Ecgwine, of Worcester, preaching to them, amidst the din of their hammers, the composer has drowned the voices of MM. Detroyat and Silvestre, taking the name of Shakespeare in vain with his magnificent melodies and majestic orchestration. Thanks to the music allotted to them, the three crude figures of Henry, Catherine, and Anne, as sketched by the playwrights, have been transformed into as many dramatic, nay, even poetical, characters, even as the three Fair Women of German mythology became transformed into an emblem of the Trinity through the fancy of the seventh-century prelate.

Seeing what M. Saint Saëns has done with a poem whose only redeeming qualities are three dramatic situations, not unskilfully contrived, but entirely at variance with history, it is not difficult to guess what he could have done with libretti such as Carré and Barbier's "Mignon," Scribe's "Hugenots," or du Ponte's "Don Juan." As it is, wherever and whenever there was a chance given to him, M. Saint Saëns has fully risen to it, save in one instance, which I shall mention by-and-by.

At the rise of the curtain Anne Boleyn is about to be introduced to Queen Katherine, whose lady of honour she is to be. This we learn from a conversation between the Duke of Norfolk and the new Spanish ambassador, Don Gomez de Feria, who has been especially selected for the post that he may wed the daughter of the future Lord Rochford. Of course Charles V., by whom Gomez is sent, could have never known of Norfolk's plotting to bring

about the very marriage which Gomez has come to prevent, so the latter freely unbosoms himself in a *cantabile*, "La beauté que je sers est telle," of charming simplicity, the second couplet being taken up in barcarolle measure by Norfolk.

Almost immediately after we learn that Buckingham has been condemned to death, and this naturally leads us to look for Wolsey, but there is not a shadow of the great cardinal to be seen, nor the least allusion to his name throughout the piece. On the other hand, the first hint of the king's intention to divorce Katherine is revealed in the presence of the whole Court, though in Spain it must have been known already; witness whereof the embassy of Gomez to avert the calamity, by marrying the designing Anne herself, who as yet *has not been introduced to the Queen.*

Ex uno disce omnes. I have a more pleasant task than following step by step this farrago of rubbish—namely, the singling out a few detached numbers in the score which, ere long, will have made the tour of the world.

Let me tell you, though, that by doing so I commit an injustice towards M. Saint Saëns, who claims—and rightly—to have written an opera in the highest meaning of the term, a work pervaded throughout by one leading idea. My limited space must be the sole excuse.

In addition to the *cantabile*, already the first act contains a delicious *larghetto* for the baritone (Henry VIII.) "Qui donc commande quand il aime," reminding you of nothing so much as of the "Voi che sapete" of the "Nozze de Figaro," though on comparing the two side by side there is not one bar to trace this likeness more conclusively; then there is a chorus for soprani and alti, "Noble dame, pour vous plaire," which for beauty and masterly handling of the instruments may vie with the opening scene of the second act of the "Hugenots;" but the three numbers, beautiful as they are, sink into comparative and temporary oblivion after listening to the concerted piece in which the Queen pleads for Buckingham's life, the king breathing words of passionate love into Anne Boleyn's ear, the *De profundis* sung outside as Buckingham marches to his doom lending a gravity to the whole, which is only marred by one defect, the involuntary or intentional weakness of the choral masses. Here, again, a certain likeness to the "Miserere" of the "Trovatore" is audible, but M. Saint Saëns' *morceau* is vastly superior both in *technique* and harmony.

The grand scene in the third act, where Henry defies the Pope's legate, who excommunicates him, and has the doors of the synod thrown open to the people, is unfortunately preceded by a scientific but monotonous piece of scoring—the only blot upon the whole work, from the listener's point of view.

The triumph of the evening, and I must conclude. It is the culminating scene of the drama, and showed M. Saint Saëns' powers to the full. I am inclined to doubt that it formed part of MM. Detroyat and Silvestre's original plot. If mistaken, I beg their pardon ; but I can scarcely believe that, ignorant as they have shown themselves with regard to the main facts of a most hackneyed episode in English history, they, too, are acquainted with Schiller's "Mary Stuart," from which the scene has evidently been borrowed, though it is historically as inaccurate as that of the great German poet.

Five years after Anne Boleyn's marriage and coronation—MM. Detroyat and Silvestre are evidently not aware that Elizabeth was born in 1533, and Edward VI., Jane Seymour's son, in 1537—five years, then, after the marriage, Anne repairs to Kimbolton in order to obtain a letter written by her to Don Gomez de Feria, whilst both were at the Court of Francis I., in the possession of Catherine. The struggle between the guilty woman who supplicates and the victim who repulses, scored in a transcendent fashion, makes us scarcely notice the arrival of the King and Don Gomez, until the former, in order to obtain the letter of whose existence he is aware, but the contents whereof he ignores, tries to rouse his discarded wife's jealousy and ire by a purposely exaggerated fondling of Anne. Altogether original the theme is not ; but its freshness of expression, the skilful blending of the instruments, the perfidy breaking forth in every note, rather than in the words, until Katherine, struck to the very heart, finishes the interview by a series of closely followed, heartrending exclamations, may be conceived with equal grandeur—I doubt whether it will be surpassed.

The audience, absolutely spellbound, kept perfectly silent for more than half a minute after the last note had died away ; then, with a shout such as I have only heard once, they re-demanded the whole.

The costumes and scenery, in spite of the clamour raised about them, are nothing out of the common. Of the three principal

performers, Lassalle (Henry), Mdlle. Krauss (Katherine), Mdlle. Richard (Anne), it would be difficult to speak in too high terms.

Of "Peau Neuve," born, buried, and forgotten in the space of four days, it is scarcely necessary to speak. The Palais Royal has had a run of bad luck lately, which it was thought the new production by a young and untried author would stem and turn. M. Francisque scarcely thought well of the piece on reading it, but, to make assurance doubly sure, recommended a partial reconstruction by that veteran playwright, M. Gondinet. The result was the most ignominious frost I ever witnessed, here or elsewhere. The plot, if not altogether original, was at least not so hackneyed in France as in London, where Mr. Toole has made the character of the *nouveau riche* wishing to mix with his social superiors almost his own. Messrs. Byron and Burnand have, however, never endeavoured to make the parvenu ashamed of his wealth, and the means by which he obtained it, with a determination of having recourse to any subterfuge rather than divulge either. This determination led to complications involving three acts, the last of which the public and critics absolutely refused to see, though it contained the best situation, where the former head waiter impulsively throws off his veneer, snatches up his napkin, and attends upon his former customers. I think I saw Mr. Toole do something similar at the Gaiety, in a piece the title of which has slipped my memory.

So much for the vaunted benefits of collaboration, which those who have never tried it in England are never tired of recommending. In collaboration there is almost always a dupe, unless both writers be men of equal talent, though each in a different branch. This dupe is generally the man of talent, for the novice is simply a foolhardy oarsman, rowing in the same boat with the experienced dramatist, but "not with the same sculls," as Douglas Jerrold expressed it. Little by little he shows his colleague that at "crab catching" he is an adept, but that should any accident befall he cannot swim. Rather than drown the veteran is obliged to row for two. Should they reach land in safety the tyro generally repeats that without him the veteran would have been a lost man.

"Le Roi des Grecs," the new drama, in five acts and seven tableaux, by M. Adolphe Belot (produced at the Gaiety on the 8th of March) is not, as its title would lead you to infer, an historical, but simply a sensation play, which but for one scene in a gambling-house, would lack every element of novelty to English audiences provided the latter had not seen Mr. Pinero's "Money Spinner," where a similar situation has been treated in a much more masterly way, and virtually belongs to, and is deftly incorporated with, the plot, whilst in M. Belot's drama it is simply an excrescence to catch the vulgar; for the inveterate gamblers who went to see it on the first night—and Paris is full of them—openly declared that had the author appealed to them they could show him one or two tricks, each worth a dozen of his. Short of this, it is the story of a brother-in-law sacrificing himself to save his sister's husband from shame and dishonour, the latter being a painter by profession and a gambler by vocation. The innocent man is imprisoned, the guilty one remains at large, ignorant of the former's punishment. He redeems his career, and is about to return to France, to meet his brother-in-law, who is about to be liberated, when he is tempted by two adventurers to become their confederate. The innocent convict failing to keep the appointment owing to a fresh but groundless charge having been brought against him, the erstwhile gambler is going headlong to perdition, when an insult offered to his daughter makes him blow up the whole of the concern by peaching. This scene, and a prison interior with the convicts at work, are the two sensations relied on. The latter is neither better nor worse than the second act of "Never Too Late to Mend," but there is a little more movement. The critics, however, have pronounced it unique. Tell them that we in England are absolutely weary of that sort of exhibition, that we can and do much better at our second-rate theatres, they laugh and shrug their shoulders. So one does not tell them, but warns intending purchasers. The acting of "Le Roi de Grecs" is very good.

"L'As de Trefle" (The Ace of Clubs) is the detection of a murder by means of a card left in the hands of the murdered woman. Cleverly constructed, well played, and magnificently mounted, it is likely to fill the coffers of Madame Sarah Bernhardt, at whose theatre, the Ambigu, it was produced on Thursday, the 15th of March. The situations are particularly striking

from beginning to end, for some of them place us face to face with peculiar phases of Paris life which, grovelling and ignoble as they are in reality, lend themselves forcibly to scenic and dramatic illustration. A very realistic reproduction of a lower class-music hall, a free fight between the police and a set of thieves and cardsharpers, something analogous to Mr. Sims' scene in the "Lights o' London," added considerably to the success of the evening. Literary merit the piece has not—not half as much as Mr. Sims' has; but seeing that it is the début of a young playwright, M. Pierre de Courcelles, it promises well for his future career. M. Taillade, who plays the chief part, which is not the murderer, only the confederate, is simply magnificent.

I find that I have left myself no space to speak of what are really the two most important theatrical events of the month; the revival of M. Emile Augier's "Les Effrontés" at the Comedie Française (Wednesday, 7th of March), and the production of M. Auguste Vacquerie's "Formosa" at the Odéon (Friday, the 16th), but my neglect cannot be remedied now. As the month of April is likely to be, theatrically speaking, a maiden one, I must defer criticism of these two masterpieces till your next issue.

A simple line in memento of the début of a new singer, Mdlle. Rolandt, in Mozart's "Magic Flute." She sings the music as it is written, and as Nilsson sings it; but seeing that the upper notes are particularly thin, and not at all relished by the Parisian public or critics, her acquisition to M. Carvalho is likely to prove a white elephant.

Our Musical-Box.

NOT very long ago an old friend of mine—a cosmopolitan impressario, agreeably devoid of conventional prejudices and altogether unsusceptible of being shocked by artistic shortcomings in the way of either morality or manners—had a mind to make the personal acquaintance of an eminent cotemporary composer, for whose works he entertained the liveliest admiration. Perhaps he only wished to look the great man in the face and

pay him verbal tribute of hero-worship; perhaps the possibility of a musical "transaction" in the operatic line had flashed across his singularly bright and receptive mind's eye. Any way, he journeyed to the ancient capital of Bohemia on purpose to visit the composer in question, obtained his address, and resolutely hunted him up in an unfashionable and somewhat intricate *quartier* of that most picturesque city. Having at length, after mounting an unconscionable number of stairs, and erroneously knocking at several doors, obtained admission to the dwelling of genius, my friend found that abode to be a largish sky-parlour, well lighted, but uncarpeted and sparsely furnished. At a table in the centre of this modest apartment sate the doughty composer himself, in his shirt-sleeves, smoking a huge china-bowled pipe, with a foaming tankard of Märzen-Bier handy to his clutch, and his slender stock of body-linen, fresh from the washtub, suspended on lines running above his head criss-cross from corner to corner of the room. The other leading features of the scene were a small bed, a large grand-piano, a goodly collection of wine and beer-bottles, and a dense atmosphere of Knaster smoke.

The denizen of this, in every sense of the word, Bohemian lodging, was no less a personage than Anton Dvorák (pronounced Dvorjacques, as in French), the performance of whose admirable "Stabat Mater" by the London Musical Society at St. James's Hall, on Saturday evening, March 10, constituted the most important event of the early metropolitan musical season of 1883. It is not too much to say that no work of this class, composed during the past quarter of a century, equals Dvorák's Stabat in originality, downright beauty and truthful translation, into sound of religious rapture and devotional dejection. Whilst recording this conviction in black and white, I am not unmindful of such *chef d'œuvres* as the Requiems of Brahms and Verdi, or Gounod's "Missa Solennis," and "Redemption." But there is something in Dvorák's setting of the noble old Catholic hymn more than structural grandeur, sensuous loveliness and facility of emotional utterance, respectively characterizing the magnificent compositions above alluded to. It is difficult—perhaps impossible—to give that something intelligible verbal definition. Perhaps I shall not be far off the truth in signalizing it as an exquisitely felicitous faculty of interpreting sentiment through the agencies of melody

and harmony. Dvorák's renderings of several deeply significant lines in the Stabat are psychical revelations to those who can feel, but to whom the power of expressing their feelings has not been granted. I speak, of course, always of musicians. Dvorák must himself have undergone the inner experiences of sentiment and passion hinted at so forcibly in the text of the hymn, and found within his soul the inestimable power of conveying to musical intelligences an exact and perfect understanding of the phases of feeling through which those experiences carried him. It must be clearly understood, moreover, that this descriptive gift of his, obviously not earned by labour, but inborn—never leads him astray into the labyrinth of "infinite melody," or tempts him to cross the frontier of "the Immeasurable, ever renewing itself out of itself," that mystic realm over which Richard Wagner held undisputed sway. Dvorák is invariably as correct, from a classical point of view, in form as he is romantic in treatment and lavish in adornment of his subjects—for the most part brief and refreshingly simple themes. He sticks closely to precedents of the very best sort, and exhibits a surprising loyalty to the Masters who shaped out and established what we are accustomed to speak of as "classic forms." Some of his most elaborate musical architecture in the Stabat is built up upon no broader foundation than a four-bar tune, which, however, makes itself felt in every detail of the superstructure. Dvorák is no spendthrift of melody. On the contrary, he is chary of *Leitmotive*, but exhibits a surpassing knowledge of how to impart variety of import and manner to the themes he deals out so sparingly.

Dvorák's "Stabat Mater" leaves no executant resource of the musical art unappealed to for the production of every tone-effect hitherto achieved by vocal and instrumental combinations. He utilizes the human voice in delicate threads as well as imposing masses of sound, the full orchestra of our day and the mighty organ, with all its modern developments. All these implements he manipulates with a master-hand. No secret of orchestration is unknown to him, and his fertility of invention, as far as "new methods of treatment" are concerned, is apparently inexhaustible. Of the performance much might be said that I propose to leave unsaid, because of my gratitude to the London Musical Society for making this noble, this exalting and refining work known in

England. Mr. Barnby is an excellent chorus-master, but an indifferent orchestral leader; consequently, the choruses were capitally rendered, and the accompaniments frequently confused, faulty, and uncertain. All that can justly be pleaded in favour of the soloists, is that they did their "level best" from first to last, sparing no pains or exertion to achieve results that were creditable, if not uniformly satisfactory.

Richard Wagner's death, unexpected though scarcely premature, affected artistic Germany with all the force and poignancy of a national calamity. The first generous instinct of his countrymen, on being apprised of the irreparable loss they had suffered, was to make ample provision for the dead Master's widow and children. Happily, as it now appears, these bereaved ones stand in no need of material assistance, or, indeed, of aught but consolation for their bereavement. Besides "Wahnfried," his handsome and luxuriously furnished villa at Bayreuth, a town-house at Munich presented to him years ago by King Louis II. of Bavaria, a small collection of valuable paintings, and a fine musical library, Wagner left behind him *tantièmes*, or royalties, equivalent to an income of about £5,000 a year, to be considerably augmented, in all probability, a few years hence. In 1874, when he happened to be severely pressed for a large sum of ready money, he pledged the *tantièmes* of "Rienzi," "The Flying Dutchman," and "Tannhaeuser," for fifteen years to a Frankfort music-publisher. The mortgage has still six years to run, at the expiration of which term Wagner's heirs will recover their suspended rights to the "author's share" of all profits accruing from the performance of his works. It may be presumed, moreover, that his autobiography —which he completed, revised with infinite carefulness, and caused to be printed some time before his death—will be published ere long, and prove a small fortune in itself to his family. It is contained in four goodly volumes, prepared and produced by an eminent typographical firm at Basel, and only three copies of it exist at present, one of which he gave to his father-in-law, Francis Liszt, and another to his only son, Siegfried, whilst of the third he retained possession for his own use as a book of reference.

It was Wagner's habit to make his musical sketches in pencil.

Ruled paper was strewn about in all the rooms of Wahnfried, his villa at Bayreuth ; and he would often wander about the house all night long, thinking out "treatments" and excogitating "subjects," which he would jot down whenever they happened to occur to him, in bedroom, parlour, or library. His wife collected these scraps of composition—often mere phrases, experiments in modulation, or suggestions as to the instrumentation of some orchestral passage—and endeavoured to impart endurance to them by inking over the pencil-marks, till the task grew too onerous even for her enthusiastic love and hero-worship. Then she conceived the project of gathering together all Wagner's manuscripts, to be deposited and for ever preserved in Wahnfried. For several years past she has conducted a voluminous correspondence with all manner of people in all sorts of countries, having for its object the obtention, for love or money, of her husband's early manuscripts, scattered abroad in every direction. Success has crowned, for the most part, her indefatigable perseverance, which has led to the discovery in strange nooks and corners of many compositions totally forgotten by their author until she laid them before him. The "Wagner Musical Archives" thus rescued from oblivion constitute an inestimable relic of the dead Master, and one of Wahnfried's most interesting curiosities.

A popular pianist, whose comely countenance was formerly familiar to the musical public all over the world, but who for some years past has led a retired life in his native city, died the other day at Dresden. Leopold de Meyer of the agile fingers, indefatigable tongue and inexhaustible spirits, has joined the majority. He was born near Vienna in the year 1816 of well-to-do Jewish parents, and studied the piano, for which he had a passion, under Charles Czerny and Professor Fischhof, both of whom regarded him as a pupil of exceptional capacities. He soon acquired the reputation of an extraordinarily brilliant player, and obtained permission to play at Court, not only at the State Concerts, but at the "*soirées intimes*" given by different members of the Imperial Family. On one occasion—I should mention that he was wont to exert himself violently during his performances upon the pianoforte—he was summoned to Prague "by command" to play before the Emperor Ferdinand and Empress Maria. Having executed some of the most elaborate and laborious *morceaux* of his *répertoire*, he

was rising from his music-stool to withdraw, when the grey old Kaiser, grinning with superlative slyness, toddled up to him and exclaimed, "My dear Meyer, I have heard a good lot of piano players, I have heard Thalberg (here Meyer bowed profoundly); I have heard Liszt (here Meyer bent himself nearly double); but not one of them sweated half so profusely as you do!" Tableau! De Meyer used to tell this story with keen relish of its intrinsic comicality, although the joke was unmistakably at his own expense.

Another "personal anecdote" I had from his own lips many years ago. In 1843 he was bidden to Stamboul. The Commander of the Faithful had heard of his skill as a musical pyrotechnist, and wished to see what he could do. De Meyer borrowed a grand-piano from one of the Austrian Secretaries of Embassy, himself a distinguished amateur pianist, and had it conveyed to the Palace, where it was set up in one of the larger reception-rooms. When the Sultan perceived it, on entering the apartment where De Meyer was awaiting him, he started, as though in alarm, asked his attendants "what that monster was, standing there on three legs?" and utterly refused to listen to any performance upon it until those offending members should be removed, Accordingly, the legs were unscrewed and taken away, the body of the instrument deposited on the floor, and Leopold de Meyer, squatting cross-legged on a piece of carpet *à la Turque*, went through his showy programme as best he might in that embarrassing attitude. The Padishah was delighted, and expressed his gratification in a highly satisfactory manner by presenting De Meyer with the sum of £1,200, as baksheesh. That was the sort of recognition of his talent that De Meyer thoroughly appreciated, for he was, unlike the majority of professional musicians, the thriftiest of men. I remember being at Karlsbad, years ago, one season when he visited that sanatorium to undergo its "cure" for tumefied liver, and sharing the surprise of Austro-German society there at the modest, not to say self-detracting, guise in which he announced his advent in the Kur-Liste. Omitting the predicate of nobility that lent a certain distinction to his by no means unusual name, and the honorific titles (such as Imperial and Royal Court Pianist, for instance) dozens of which he had the right to tack on to his patronymic, he had simply described himself as "Leopold Meyer, Pianoforte-Player from Vienna." I thought it

charmingly unassuming on his part, until I found out from the principal Badarzh that De Meyer's sole object in thus temporarily foregoing his honours of birth and conferment was to save the equivalent of a guinea in Austrian currency. All persons taking the waters at Karlsbad have to pay a "Cure-Tax" to the town proportionate to their social standing and means. As "De Meyer, Hofpianist," a nobleman and Court official, he would have been mulcted in the tax imposed upon first-class invalids; as plain "Meyer, Clavierspieler," he naturally lapsed into the third class, by which arrangement he was ten florins and a half in pocket. At that time he was, be it remembered, a very wealthy man, and wore upon his breast decorations galore, given to him by half the Sovereigns of Europe.

Amongst the more recent musical publications that reached me in the course of last month, two songs, both of which are issued by Messrs. Willcocks & Co., deserve especial mention as tuneful and vigorous compositions. "King and Crown, a Roundhead Song" by Mr. Allen Macbeth, is a strongly-marked and spirited melody, thrown into striking relief by a cleverly-written accompaniment. Mr. Odoardo Barri's "Sons of the Sea" possesses what, in the opinion of Prince Bismarck, is the chief merit of any musical composition—namely, a "tune that can be whistled;" by which I take the epigrammatical Chancellor to have meant a tune at once so easy to remember and of so taking a character that any one endowed with a tolerable ear would be likely to retain it in his memory after having heard it two or three times. The same publishers have also reproduced the Parisian edition of Schuler's "Grévin Polka," which is extremely cheery and "danceable;" and a *cahier* of Nursery Rhymes entitled "Grandmamma's Jokes for little Folks—original music interspersed with humorous narrative," the composer of which has somewhat too lugubriously failed to fulfil the promise inscribed on his title-page, alike with respect to originality and humour. He does gratuitous wrong to such a dear old familiar text as, "Where are you going, my pretty maid?" long ago provided with a capital tune of its own, by re-setting it to laboured and ugly strains; and the "Grandmamma" of his creation, whose claim to attention is exclusively based upon her alleged waggishness, is simply a drivelling dullard. When one reflects how easy it would have been for Mr. George

Fox not to write "Grandmamma's Jokes for little Folks," one cannot help deploring the indomitable incapacity of some people to "let well alone."

Wm. Beatty-Kingston.

A Promise of May!

Promittas facito : quid enim promittere lædit?
Pollicitis dives quilibet esse potest.

OH! promise me, that some day, you and I
May take our love together to some sky
Where we can be alone, and faith renew,
And find the hollow where those flowers grew—
Those first sweet violets of early spring
That come in whispers, thrill us both, and sing
Of love unspeakable that is to be.
Oh! promise me!

Oh! promise me that you will wait to taste
Love's sweetest essence, till we pass this waste
Of weary wandering, and reach that shore
Silent with triumph of our evermore,
Blue with our endless hope, and kiss'd by waves
Of perfect pleasure, far from gloom and graves
Of buried sorrows! Love! this ecstasy
Oh! promise me!

Oh! promise me! that you will take me then—
The most unworthy of all living men—
And make me sit beside you, in your eyes
Seeing the vision of our paradise,
Hearing God's message, whilst the organ rolls
Its mighty music to our very souls—
No love less perfect than such life with thee.
Oh! promise me!

C. S.

Our Play-Box.

BLUE BEARD; OR, THE HAZARD OF THE DYE.

A New Burlesque-Drama, in Three Acts, by F. C. Burnand. Produced at the Gaiety Theatre, on Monday, March 12, 1883.

Baron Abomelique de Barbe Bleue	Miss E. Farren.	Pierre	Miss B. Matiste.
Petipois	Mr. E. Terry.	Alphonse	Miss Handley.
Joliquet	Miss Phyllis Broughton.	Gustave	Miss Chester.
Becquille	Miss M. Watson.	Adolphe	Miss Ross.
Curedent	Miss P. Watson.	Alexis	Miss E. Broughton.
Mustafa	Mr. F. Wyatt.	Elise	Miss P. Matiste.
Tête de Veau ...	Mr. H. Monkhouse.	Marie	Miss De Wyndale.
Dodo	Mr. Henley.	Louise	Miss Du Pre.
Jean de Talons aux Ressorts ...	Mr. W. Ward.	Coralie	Miss Clevis.
Anne	Miss C. Gilchrist.	Rosalie	Miss Gilbert.
		Lili	Miss Kate Vaughan.

THE public should stand greatly indebted to Mr. Burnand for having given to a popular theatre a very palatable form of comic opera, instead of the wretched entertainments, miscalled burlesques, that have dragged their slow length along until they have begun to weary even their most devoted admirers and patrons. Familiarity is very properly said to breed contempt, and certainly when a close familiarity is established between the artists on the stage and the front row of the stalls, and when entertainments are fashioned for the vanity of the one and the idle pastime of the other, it was high time that some one should organize a new departure. For years and years past the critics of the daily and weekly press have protested with all available earnestness against a system in which no one was properly sincere. The manager, who wanted the critics to give their opinion on his public entertainment, and then ridiculed them for giving it, was certainly not sincere in believing that he had done his utmost with all available material. No one knows better what a good play is or what good acting is than John Hollingshead. He is a man of experience and judgment; he has been a dramatic critic; and it is impossible to believe that during the whole of his career as a dramatic critic he could have seen anything much more paltry than the recent editions of Gaiety burlesques. Dramatic critics do not profess to be more exclusive in their intellectuality than other people are, yet a visit to a Gaiety burlesque has been considered by them a waste of vital force, irrespective of the deplorable waste of time. They are, after all, but the mouthpieces of the public, and it seemed to them that what appeared to be in their eyes mere childishness and abject buffoonery, might be viewed in the

same light by other patrons of the British drama. It was no croaking, it was no ridiculous prudery, it was no carping spirit that induced public writers to deplore the inanity that was advertised as art. If the manager had been really outspoken he would have said that he was letting down his amusements to the low level of some of the most brainless patrons of the drama in existence. The authors were certainly not sincere. They could all do better work; they have all done better work. Secretly they were ashamed of their calling, when there was no reason for anything of the kind. They winced under the title of burlesque writers, and knew full well that they were writing down far below the level of their ordinary intelligences to suit the idiosyncrasies of these particular playgoers. They were like the verse-makers who have to write up to a completed picture, only that they write down to the front row of the stalls. The artists on the stage were certainly not sincere. They all knew that they could do better things, only it satisfied them for the moment to pretend to act and tumble down to the level of the "boys." "The drama's laws, the drama's patrons give!" Yes, it is quite true; but what a legislative body! Mr. Alfred Austin once described a society where "the half-drunk lean over the half-dressed." Happily, in this instance, there was an intervening orchestra; but the spectacle for the outside spectator was just as offensive. When ladies on the stage keep up running comments with friends in the stalls, and regard the majority of those who have paid their money to be amused with profound indifference, it was high time that some one should struggle for a better state of things.

An erroneous impression got abroad that burlesque was unpopular in critical circles, simply because it was burlesque; it was said that a certain order of mind demanded nothing but solemn and serious work, and that a dead set was being made against the lighter amusements of the day. Never was there a greater mistake. Burlesque was attacked because it was not burlesque; because it imitated and parodied nothing; because it was senseless and formless; because it was not really amusing but miserably dull. Why should writers attack burlesque who have derived some of the very merriest evenings at the play they can recall at the hands of burlesque actors and actresses? Let us go back to the past when burlesque was burlesque. Oh! well-remembered Olympic days, when Robson was in his triumph and George Cooke was his right-

hand man. That was acting indeed ; that was the sublimity of burlesque. It was inspired acting ; it was great, and yet it amused the public. In those days it was urged that Robson was wasting his time on burlesque, that he could do far greater and nobler things, that he ought to be playing the real Shylock instead of the sham one. What nonsense! Robson could never have mastered Shylock in its entirety. He could flash but he could not sustain. He was a brilliant parodist, not a creator. But they were golden days for all that. Miss Herbert, afterwards one of the best comedy actresses of her time, was in the Olympic company, and the boys of those days raved not a little about Miss Wyndham and Miss Cottrell, did they not ?

The scene changes to the Strand Theatre, just emerged from dreary nothingness into immortality. That reminds one. There was a night—does any one remember it ?—when some tipsy fellow in the boxes handed to Mrs. Selby a wreath of immortelles. The sarcasm was not to be endured. There was a hideous rumpus, and sundry apologies had to be made to the naturally offended lady. This incident preceded the glorious days of burlesque at the Strand. Who will ever forget them who was a boy in 1859? Marie Wilton was the idol of the hour. Her Pippo in the "Maid and the Magpie" made the youths of the period frantic. And then her Albert in "William Tell ;" her Gringoire in "Esmeralda," when she beat the drum arrayed in silk fleshings and a sheepskin coat! And with Marie Wilton was a goodly company—Jimmy Rogers, a quaint actor with a wonderful facial expression, very much in the Edward Terry style; Johnnie Clarke, the very antithesis of Rogers—can they ever be forgotten as Claude Frollo and Quasimodo in "Esmeralda ;" Fanny Josephs, one of the sweetest and most sympathetic actresses the stage ever had ; Kate Carson, a tall and handsome dark beauty, and the same faithful old Turner, who is acting at the Strand to this very day. And Edge—what has become of Edge, a noteworthy subordinate in those memorable days ? But in those days the burlesques were not elaborated emptiness. The actors had something to do ; the actresses had something to say. The books were written by H. J. Byron, and Frank Talfourd, and the Brothers Brough, and Andrew Halliday, and Leicester Buckingham, and men of that kidney. They were not indifferent works of literature.

Again the scene changes to the Royalty. It is the first night

of "Ixion," written by Frank Burnand. The manageress is Mrs. Selby, the heroine of the immortelle story, and she is vastly interested in the Misses Pelham, who never made a distinguished mark. Lydia Maitland is here, a very handsome girl, and Ada Cavendish, the Venus on this memorable occasion. Felix Rogers, a mercurial comedian, and Jenny Wilmore, his wife, play the leading characters; and Joe Robins, the favourite at the Fielding Club in the old Albert Smith days, is Bacchus or Ganymede. When Felix Rogers sang, "Let dogs delight to bark and bite," to a popular tune and in a falsetto key, the success of "Ixion" was assured. No one complained of that burlesque because it was foolish; on the contrary, it was extremely well written. Another brilliant period at the Royalty came with another burlesque by Burnand. It was "Black-Eyed Susan," with its triumvirate of Patty Oliver, Fred Dewar, and Danvers, one of the best dancers the burlesque stage has ever seen, and a quaint fellow into the bargain. As for the rest, every one can remember it. The Strand days, with David James and Thomas Thorne, long before they fused at the Vaudeville; the Gaiety days, with J. L. Toole and Nellie Farren, until we come to a more recent and modern period. It would not be rash, and it certainly would be true, to state that the present Gaiety company is equal in intelligence, in skill, and in popularity to any of its predecessors. Such a burlesque actress as Nellie Farren has not been seen by the present generation of playgoers. No one in the very palmiest days of burlesque ever acted and delivered with such skill two such songs as the Street Arab's song and My Boy in "Blue Beard." But hitherto she has been wasting her opportunities. She has not been doing herself justice. There are old boys as well as young boys, and they regretted that she should so underrate her talent. Now she has her opportunity, and she makes the most of it. "Blue Beard" is not Miss Farren in another kind of costume, but an excellent bit of burlesque acting. Again, Mr. Edward Terry can compare with the best burlesque actors seen during the last quarter of a century. He is an actor, as everyone knows, who followed his fortunes at the Strand. In the new burlesque he also can act, and admirably too. Who can forget his cry of despair when Petipois has played too freely with the hair-dye of "Blue Beard?" "It won't come out!" There was a ring of tragic horror in that one sentence—an acuteness that was penetrating. It will ring in our ears as an excellent instance

of the tragi-comic force. And then there is Miss Kate Vaughan, an actress of exceptional and original grace, who is also a parodist of some delicacy. Her caricature of Sara Bernhardt is no simple imitation. To be thin and graceful is one thing; but it is quite another to burlesque the style of an actress as Miss Vaughan does. Her dance round the execution block is inimitable—a gem of caricature in its way, and no one can appreciate it who has not seen "Fédora." So, on the whole, Mr. Burnand is to be congratulated. He has converted the manager of the Gaiety Theatre to a belief in comicality as against nonsense, and he has induced the company to forget for once the boys and the front row in favour of a more extensive audience and more discriminating public.

STORM-BEATEN.

A New and Original Drama, in a Prologue and Five Acts, by Robert Buchanan. Produced at the Adelphi Theatre, on Wednesday, March 14, 1883.

Squire Orchardson ...	Mr. E. F. Edgar.	Priscilla Sefton ...	Miss Ewerretta Lawrence
Richard Orchardson...	Mr. J. H. Barnes.	Jacob Marvel ...	Mr. A. Redwood.
Dame Christianson ...	Mrs. Billington.	Sally Marvel ...	Miss Clara Jecks.
Christian Christianson	Mr. Charles Warner.	Jabez Greene ...	Mr. Beerbohm Tree.
Kate Christianson ...	Miss Amy Roselle.	Johnnie Downs ...	Mr. Harry Proctor.
Mr. Sefton	Mr. J. G. Shore.	Captain E. S. Higginbotham ...	Mr. E. R. Fitzdavis.

MR. ROBERT BUCHANAN'S novel, called "God and the Man," is remarkable as much for the power of the story as for the eccentricity of the dedication attached to the book. The author calls his romance "A study of the vanity and folly of individual hate," and proceeds to dedicate it to an "Old Enemy." The old enemy was none other than Dante Gabriel Rossetti, poet and painter, now no more, and with whom it could scarcely be supposed that Mr. Robert Buchanan would have very much in common. Their ways are divergent; their songs are set in a distinctly different key; the art they respectively followed was inharmonious; the earnestness of the creed of each sprang from a different source. It would have been strange indeed had two such men sympathized in anything appertaining to art or poetry. It may be interesting, however, to quote Mr. Buchanan's general confession or apology, in which he frankly owns to have misunderstood the bent of Rossetti's mind and the distinct quality of his genius. There was scarcely any need for it. We do not look for regret from the order of mind that expresses its disapproval of Rossetti's art, his colouring and his pictures by explosions of derision and ill-restrained laughter. The Philistine will remain the Philistine

until the end of the chapter. You cannot cure the blackamoor of his skin or the leopard of his spots: it would be a needless waste of time to do so. To sympathy with Rossetti and his school is not after all a matter of education, but of predilection. It is not acquired taste; it is inborn refinement and the possession of the higher qualities of imagination. Still it is interesting to learn even of the conversion of Mr. Robert Buchanan.

"Since the work was first published the 'Old Enemy' to whom it was dedicated has passed away. Although his name did not appear on the front of the book, as it would certainly have done had I possessed more moral courage, it is a melancholy pleasure to me to reflect that he understood the dedication and accepted it in the spirit in which it was offered. That I should ever have underrated his exquisite work is simply a proof of the incompetency of all criticism, however honest, which is conceived adversely, hastily, and from an unsympathetic point of view; but that I should have ranked myself for the time being with the Philistines and encouraged them to resist an ennobling and refining literary influence (of which they stood and stand so mournfully in need) must remain to me a matter of permanent regret."

The dedication to "God and the Man" is twofold. The first poem is dated October, 1881, and headed

TO AN OLD ENEMY.

I would have snatched a bay-leaf from thy brow,
  Wronging the chaplet on an honoured head:
In peace and tenderness I bring thee now
  A lily-flower instead.

Pure as thy purpose, blameless as thy song,
  Sweet as thy spirit, may this offering be:
Forget the bitter blame that did thee wrong,
  And take the gift from me.

The second dedication is dated August, 1882, and is addressed direct to

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

Calmly, thy royal robe of Death around thee,
  Thou sleepest, and weeping brethren round thee stand.
Gently they placed, ere yet God's angel crowned thee,
  My lily on thy head!

I never knew thee living, O my brother!
  But on thy breast my lily of love now lies;
And by that token we shall know each other
  When God's voice saith, "Arise!"

The story of "God and the Man," at first sight lends itself

admirably to the purpose of the stage, though it does not necessarily follow that a novel written with dramatic effect will on that account evolve itself into a play. In a picturesque period of the last century we see the latest signs and the last bitter fruit of the hereditary hate between the Christiansons and the Orchardsons of the Fen country. The last heirs of this horrible quarrel are found in Christian Christianson, a fine manly representative of the English farmer, and Richard Orchardson, the refined and delicate son of the rich squire of the parish. The parents of both boys daily feed this feud. It is essentially requisite, however, to keep in view, and strongly in view, the physical disparity between the two lads. The author is careful to emphasize it, when he depicts a famous scene where Christian Christianson thrashes Richard within an inch of his life for killing a favourite dog. The bad blood engendered is made to boil by means of the lash, and Richard bears a lifelong mark of the terrible encounter in boyhood. But quarrels as fierce as these might be softened but for the occasionally outspoken influence of women. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred where men fall out and would be reconciled again, it is the hidden and secret influence of a vindictive woman that prevents the healing of the wound. "Hell has no fury like a woman scorned." Quite true; and as often as not she takes it out by nursing the feud that it should be her nature to heal. But it is no serpent amongst the branches of the family tree, no asp in the basket of figs, that stings the Christianson contention. Women are the unhappy accident that turn a simple hate into a determined savagery as between man and man. Christian's sister has fallen under the spell of his old foe Richard, and been ruined by him, and, as if this were not bad enough, both men passionately love the same woman. This girl is a charming character, one Priscilla Sefton, the daughter of a blind wandering preacher, who devotes his life and his income to saving souls, in the primitive fashion adopted by his master, John Wesley. The mixture of puritanism and poetry in this girl is very delightful; she is as natural as she is novel in fiction, and is a refreshing feature of the painful story. With much art the novelist is able to elaborate the incidents of the seduction of poor Kate Christianson, her desertion by her base lover, and her miraculous preservation from death by the good Priscilla, who has innocently aggravated the quarrel by inspiring love in the breasts of both these men.

A climax comes with the discovery by Christian of his sister's ruin, and of her seducer's departure for America with the only woman that Christian loves. He follows them on board ship disguised, he is put into irons by the captain for insubordination, his enemy Richard endeavours to fire the ship in order to destroy his foe, and at last, after many adventures, the two men are left alone to die of hunger and cold in the Arctic regions. The description that follows is the most powerful in the whole book, but it needs no experienced eye to see that for the purposes of the stage it is assuredly overrated. The men are attacked by bears, they encounter hideous adventures, and at last travelling through the valley of the shadow of death their animosity softens, and Christian, with true pathos, not only forgives his offending brother, but buries him in the snow with his own hands. Left alone to die now, friendless and forgotten, he is rescued at the last moment, and returns home safely to marry Priscilla Sefton. The ethics here are unexceptional: the story is told with religious fervour.

Strangely enough, Mr. Buchanan has, intentionally or unintentionally, missed the three most forcible dramatic features of his own book. First of all, he has ignored the necessity of any physical contrast between the men by making them both giants, or allowing them to be played by sons of Anak; secondly, he has totally missed the exposition of the beautiful character of Priscilla Sefton; and lastly, by bringing home Richard Orchardson safe and well to marry the girl he has so grievously injured, he has unnecessarily shocked his audience. The last of these mistakes can very probably be rectified with very little trouble, but the first two must stand as they were. The result is certainly a good Adelphi play of stirring incidents, although of a solemn kind. It begins far better than it finishes, and there is such charm in Mr. Beverley's scenery, pure, sunny, and English, and such variety in the conduct of the play, that it would not be surprising if hysterical movement, in this instance, supplies the place of pathos.

To talk of acting in its highest and most subtle sense, is of course impossible in connection with a drama pitched in so high a key as this. Mr. Charles Warner is one of the most passionate and impulsive actors on the stage. He never rests; he is always at work, toiling like a horse, even with a bad part. He sets an excellent example to all with whom he is brought into contact, and, if human energy can carry the point, he never allows the

interest of the play to flag. The worst of it is, however, that the character of Christian Christianson has no light and shade, and the actor, from first to last, has to keep it up at fever-heat. Mr. Warner gets one fine chance in his manly and assuredly powerful denunciation of the man who has seduced the careworn sister. Here his voice rose clear, and he touched everybody. There was the right ring in the curse; it was never stagey or in any way melodramatic. As ill-luck will have it, Mr. J. H. Barnes, as Richard, has to be well-nigh as violent as Christian; and the great snow scene certainly suffered from want of contrast between the two men. It became wearisome, because the ear was a little tired of the same key of despair—a key that had already been sounded by Mrs. Billington, an excellent representative of the stern Puritan mother; by Mr. E. F. Edgar, as the vindictive Squire; and by Miss Amy Roselle, who expresses her grief for her condition far more forcibly than pathetically. Miss Eweretta Lawrence made a very promising first appearance as the Priscilla of the play, who is a very different young lady from the Priscilla in the book. Here she is found to be a somewhat frivolous and worldly-minded young lady, with more of the French coquette about her than the Wesleyan maiden. This young actress is certainly clever, and has a bright, animated style, with much welcome expression, but she has not quite discovered the art of managing her voice. The theatre and the part of a daft Lubin of the last century, do not suit the comedy of Mr. Beerhohm Tree; but Miss Clara Jecks is one of the brightest little comic actresses of the day, and in this instance relieves the melodrama from much of its inevitable gloom.

A GREAT CATCH.

A New and Original Comedy, in Three Acts, by Hamilton Aïdé. Produced at the Olympic Theatre, on Saturday afternoon, March 17, 1883.

Sir Martin Ingoldsby	Mr. W. H. Vernon.	Baliffs	Mr. Ashford. / Mr. Pickover.
Lord de Motteville ...	Mr. David Fisher.	Lady de Motteville ...	Mrs. Leigh Murray.
Hon. George de Motteville	Mr. J. A. Rosier.	Hon. Bertha de Motteville	Miss Lucy Buckstone.
Lord Boodle	Mr. Beerbohm Tree.	Lady Stanmore ...	Miss Achorch.
Mr. Shakerley ...	Mr. Fred. Cape.	Miss Stanmore ...	Miss Hastings.
Mr. Gerald Anson ...	Mr. T. C. Bindloss.	Hon. Mrs. Beaumont ...	Madame Etoile.
Lord Stanmore ...	Mr. Burroughs.	Miss Beaumont ...	Miss Edmiston.
Horner	Mr. W. E. Blatchley.	Mrs. Ghouler	Miss Ewell.
Henry	Mr. A. Darvell.	Hon. Mrs. Henry de Motteville	Miss Genevieve Ward.
Servants to Lord de Motteville	Mr. Ogilvie. / Mr. A. H. Payne.		

MR. HAMILTON AÏDÉ writes very pleasantly for the stage. He knows how to construct and fashion a play for the theatre, and when built he clothes it with neat and appropriate

language. In the present instance he has used familiar material very cleverly, and invented fresh complications out of old difficulties. The author conceives a broken-down aristocratic family, ruined in purse and credit, and seeking to repair their fortunes by the marriage of their only daughter with a wealthy Australian, who has been knighted for his influence and vast colonial enterprise. Lord de Motteville and his wife are determined that their daughter shall marry Sir Martin Ingoldsby, a man old enough to be her father, and supposed to be what the fashionable world would call a great catch. Naturally the girl is averse to such a union, as she is already engaged to the inevitable cousin, whom she loves as devotedly as such a child can love anything. Still, seeing her father's impecuniosity, and disarmed by her mother's arguments, she does not seem to be indisposed to become Lady Ingoldsby if the domestic fates will that it should be so. In plain truth Bertha de Motteville is but a bread-and-butter miss, and has no soul superior to the cup and ball with which the pretty child is continually playing. A *dea ex machinâ* appears in the person of a neglected aunt of the de Motteville family, a poor, snubbed, and humiliated relation, who, from a generous and disinterested affection for her niece, endeavours to stop what she considers to be a very heartless and unnecessary sacrifice. But how to set about her plan to destroy her natural enemy, Sir Martin Ingoldsby, who has got the ear of the family and the influence of those far more important in the household than herself? Fate delivers him into her hands. She discovers that the Australian millionaire is none other than one Richard Carlton, who years ago had defrauded her father, left him penniless, brought about his death, and done to the girl, he then loved, the greatest injury a man can commit. Now, even in the interests of an uninteresting niece, it would be quite right to unmask a man who had never repented of the wrong he had done, or attempted to repair the injury. Had his amassed fortune been built upon the proceeds of the original robbery, there would be every reason to hand the embezzler over to justice, even at fifty years of age. There is no limit to the vindictiveness of some women. But this does not happen to be the case with Sir Martin Ingoldsby. He had never profited in any way by his fraud. His fortune was made by his own industry. He had made every endeavour to discover the daughter of the man he had robbed—to save a father of his own—and to assist her with his subsequently acquired wealth. In fact, in the way of absolute atonement and contrition, he had done all

that a man could possibly do. It seems rather unnatural, therefore, for the aunt, Mrs. de Motteville, to persecute Sir Martin Ingoldsby for his past misdeeds, just as poor Forget-me-not was persecuted in the other play in which Miss Genevieve Ward distinguished herself. But Mrs. de Motteville is relentless, and drives the poor wretch to the verge of suicide. However, at the last moment, she stops the revolver just as it is going to blow his brains out, and the generous Sir Martin not only gives up the girl, but endows her with a fortune into the bargain. In the matter, therefore, of Christianity, he strikes the audience as being—with all his sins—a far better specimen of what a man should be than the hard woman who pursues so bitterly the unrighteous creed, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."

Readers of this plot will detect a great familiarity between it and Mr. Godfrey's "Parvenu," produced recently with such success at the Court Theatre; but it must be remembered that Mr. Aïdé's play was written many years ago, and in all probability long before the "Parvenu" was born or thought of. Mr. Aïdé does not certainly put his aristocratic characters—his lords and ladies—in a very favourable light, and it may be hoped that all who are anxious to pull the aristocracy down will not lay too much stress on the unaccountable snobbishness of Lady de Motteville or the idiocy of Lord Boodle.

The most difficult part in the play was awarded to Miss Genevieve Ward—that of Mrs. de Motteville; and she played it remarkably well, with a finish, an ease, a distinctness and power of expression too seldom seen in high comedy. It is the part of the piece, however disagreeable, but perhaps it can be modified and strengthened for any future representation. Mr. W. H. Vernon as Sir Martin Ingoldsby has seldom been seen to such advantage. He played the part firmly and well, and with a touch or so of very manly pathos. It is an admirably conceived and written character. As a contrast to this serious work we have some excellent eccentric comedy from Mr. Beerbohm Tree as Lord Boodle. This clever young actor has made a study of the beardless boys of to-day, and his satire is direct and trenchant. But the caricature is never over-drawn; the art is admirable enough. Mrs. Leigh Murray, Mr. David Fisher, pretty Miss Lucy Buckstone, and Mr. Rosier, filled up a very intelligent caste. The play will doubtless be seen again.

J. FORBES-ROBERTSON.

'Every man is odd.'

—TROILUS AND CRESSIDA.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN SPECIALLY FOR 'THE THEATRE' BY THE ST. JAMES'S PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPANY, 72, PICCADILLY, W.

Our Omnibus Box.

THOSE who have seen Mr. Henry Irving's superb revival of "Much Ado about Nothing," at the Lyceum Theatre, cannot fail to appreciate the beauty and grandeur of the church scene in the fourth act. This brilliant spectacle has been reproduced on canvas by Mr. J. Forbes-Robertson, the clever actor-artist. Mr. Forbes-Robertson has chosen for illustration the tableau representing the denunciation of Hero. The background of the picture is formed by the costly altar and the massive pillars that are presented with such an air of reality at the Lyceum. The characters are admirably grouped, and the picture preserves all the impressiveness and brilliancy of the stage representation. The drawing is excellent, and the portraits—which include all the principal members of the Lyceum company—are admirable. The colouring is brilliant, and the light—which is obtained on the stage by the side and foot lights—is shed upon the picture through a window placed in the background. Mr. Forbes-Robertson has succeeded capitally in this endeavour to thus suitably preserve a valuable reminiscence of one of the grandest stage-scenes that has been witnessed, even at the Lyceum.

Mr. E. Onslow Ford has just completed a life-size statue of Mr. Henry Irving as Hamlet. The actor is represented sitting down, delivering a soliloquy. The expression of the actor's face and his pose have been exactly caught by the sculptor. It is understood that the statue is intended for the Academy, whilst Mr. Forbes-Robertson's picture will either be hung at the Grosvenor Gallery, or else exhibited in connection with some other of the artist's pictures.

More good news for theatrical readers. Mr. John Hollingshead has a volume of stories and essays in the press, to be published by Messrs. Chapman & Hall, under the title of "Footlights." It is dedicated to Mr. J. L. Toole, the most popular of living actors.

At an informal meeting of the proposed Dramatic Authors' Guild, held recently at the Princess' Theatre, Mr. Bronson Howard in the chair, it was proposed by Mr. Paul Merritt, seconded by Mr. H. A. Jones, and carried unanimously—"That the above Association shall be established, under certain conditions, for the following purposes:—1. Generally to promote the interests of dramatic authors. 2. To obtain dramatic stage-right conventions with countries where they do not at present exist. 3. To improve dramatic stage-right enactments where they do exist, and especially to obtain powers of criminal prosecution against pirates. 4. To give opportunity for the free interchange of ideas on the above subjects by means of meetings to be held as determined upon. The Association to undertake no private business of any kind."

No! No! Mr. Punch, excuse me, you are wrong. The plot of the

"Silver King" has nothing whatever in common with the famous old play of "Jonathan Bradford." It resembles it in no particular or incident. Nowhere in "Jonathan Bradford" does an innocent man believe that he is guilty of a crime that he has not committed, which is the fundamental motive of the "Silver King." The story of "Jonathan Bradford; or, the Murder at the Roadside Inn," was of course based by Edward Fitzball on the French "Robert Macaire," and is briefly as follows:—Jonathan Bradford, a virtuous innkeeper, lives happily at his roadside inn with his wife and family, where they receive as one of their guests one "Mr. Adam Hayes, a wealthy man," the recent purchaser of the manor-house. Before he goes to bed he entrusts his watch to the care of Jonathan Bradford, and is known to be in possession of a large sum of money. Some scoundrels get into the inn at night and murder Mr. Hayes for his property. Jonathan Bradford rushes up when he hears the scream, and is accused of the murder by the dying and mystified Mr. Hayes, who, seeing the blood-stained knife in the hands of Jonathan, naturally concludes that he is the assassin. Imprisonment follows, and the innocent Jonathan would assuredly have been executed had not a friend procured his escape from gaol, and pure accident revealed to him the true murderers, who are skulking round the churchyard when the murdered Mr. Hayes is about to be buried. This drama, written in 1833, is contained in two acts.

But if "Jonathan Bradford" is foreign to the primary idea of the "Silver King," there are at least two popular melodramas that start with the same dramatic complication. In the "Lights o' London" an innocent man is accused of a murder, and is sworn to by the dying man—in fact, he is convicted on the evidence of dying lips. The innocent man is imprisoned, and escapes as a convict. In "Taken from Life" a murder is committed, and an innocent man is accused of it, on the strongest circumstantial evidence. He is imprisoned, and escapes by means of the Clerkenwell explosion. But, after all, these incidents are common to dramatic literature all over the world. Situations for the stage are really as limited as the notes on a piano. It is the harmony that makes the success. Who can say that "Jonathan Bradford," the "Lights o' London," and "Taken from Life," at all resemble one another, and yet unquestionably the same primary motive starts all these plays into action.

The public will be surprised to learn that the Metropolitan Board of Works has instructed their Chairman to oppose in Parliament the Bill promoted by Mr. Dixon Hartland to free theatres, music-halls, and places of amusement generally all over the kingdom, from the tyranny of antiquated and obsolete legislation. Now, the Metropolitan Board of Works has about as much concern with the amusements of the people as the London School Board. This official interference in a matter that does not concern them in the least is a simple bit of officious fussiness that savours of unreasoning and unreasonable tyranny. It is curious that whenever a body of representative vestrymen get hold of theatres, or anything resembling theatres, how disinclined they are to abandon their functions. Of recent years the Metropolitan Board of Works has been called on by the Lord

WILSON BARRETT.

'Oh, God! is there no end to my sin—
No end to its bitter fruit?'

'THE SILVER KING.'

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN SPECIALLY FOR 'THE THEATRE' BY THE ST. JAMES'S PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPANY, 72, PICCADILLY, W.

Chamberlain as a kind of quack doctor in connection with theatres and places of amusement, and on the whole has done far more harm than good. It was bad enough to be under the Lord Chamberlain and the magistrates; it was worse when this complicated authority was aggravated by Theatre Committees at the Metropolitan Board of Works reporting to the Lord Chamberlain, and driving managers literally crazy. Mr. Dixon Hartland's measure, as has been repeatedly stated in these columns, is to do exactly what a committee of the House of Commons in 1866 recommended should be done. It is to wipe out ridiculous old Acts of Parliament of George II., to amend the theatrical Acts, to relieve the Lord Chamberlain, the magistrates, and the Metropolitan Board of Works, of functions which do not appertain to them in any way whatever, and to create one harmonious department at the Home Office, under the Home Secretary, in order to deal generally with the amusements of the people. It would be little less than a public scandal if the Metropolitan Board of Works were permitted to step forward and deliberately prevent free trade in connection with the amusements of the people. Mr. Dixon Hartland's measure has cut boldly at the root of the whole difficulty; and the Metropolitan Board of Works, because it has been allowed to fuss over proscenium walls, and immaterial details, should not be allowed to prevent the people of this country from enjoying the amusements that are now prohibited by stale and antiquated legislation. As matters stand at present the Metropolitan Board of Works is impotent. It is only the hired servant or inspector of the Lord Chamberlain. It cannot shut up a disobedient theatre; it can enforce no penalties; it cannot, and should not, be allowed to organize the amusements of the hour. It cannot alter the present restrictive rules about smoking, and it has no more right to interfere with the freedom and progress of public amusements than the vestry of St. Martin's in the Fields or of St. Clement's in the Strand. What we want is a Minister of State to deal with this question; not a committee of vestrymen, with interests not always wholly apart from the theatres.

The Roscius Dramatic Club gave their third performance (fifth season) on Tuesday evening, January 23, at Ladbroke Hall, Notting Hill. The only piece presented was Lord Lytton's comedy, "Money." Mr. Percy F. Marshall's Alfred Evelyn was the feature of the piece; acting with freedom, and speaking the lines with boldness and clearness of articulation, his rendering showed much careful study of the part. His portrayal of the character was marked with great ability and cleverness, all the more to be praised on account of the effort being well sustained to the finish. In the club-room scene he was particularly realistic and natural in the assumption of the air and mien of the reckless gamester. Mr. Conyers Norton, as Sir John Vesey, made up well and was good all round; Mr. L. F. Bertram seemed ill at ease in the part of Lord Glossmore, and the result was a very uneven performance; Mr. T. E. Forster acted the empty-headed aristocrat with a fair amount of success; Mr. H. S. Ram as the active and fussy politician, Stout, was clever; Mr. Arthur Shirley in the part of Graves showed much appreciation of the character,

keeping his audience in a continual state of merriment by his quaint allusions to the defunct "Sainted Maria"—but he seemed somewhat to lose sight of the good side of Graves' character. Miss Kate Erlam exhibited effective acting as Clara Douglas, her quiet grace and easy style being especially brought out in the scenes with Evelyn, although the impersonation would have been much improved if she had infused a little more spirit into her acting. Miss Lottie Roberts, also, would have done much better if she had given more expression and emphasis to the character of Lady Franklin; but on the whole she did very well, her scene with Graves being particularly good. Miss Laura Graves was an indifferent Georgina, quite under-acting the part. Messrs. Arthur Snow, E. G. Taylor, G. F. Gee, D. Stanley, J. C. Stevens, and A. Thompson completed the cast. On the whole the characters worked together most harmoniously, showing signs of careful study of the different parts, and in some cases having evidently profited by the examples shown in the recent revival of the comedy on the professional stage. The piece was mounted very badly; in fact, the scenery and furniture were quite unworthy of such a comedy. Miss Rose Dosell, as usual, presided with taste and skill at the piano, which did duty for an orchestra. The next performance of the Club is announced for an early date, and it would be as well, if the committee decide to have numbered and reserved seats, as on the occasion above noticed, that such seats be kept at the disposal of the ticket-holders *at least* a few minutes before the time the first piece is announced to begin.

On the 23rd of January Mr. G. Raiemond gave his second annual Dramatic Recital and Concert at Brixton Hall, Acre Lane, S.W. The programme was of a miscellaneous kind, and Mr. Raiemond was fortunate in obtaining the assistance of Mr. T. Swinbourne, the tragedian, who gave selections from "As You Like It" in his very best style, and, on being enthusiastically recalled, gave a scene from "Much Ado About Nothing" most effectively. Mr. Raiemond himself commenced with a rather sensational poem by Alfred Berlyn, entitled, "Coming Home," giving excellent effect to its pathetic parts. This he followed by Dickens' "Dancing Academy," and Mark Twain's "Curing a Cold," from both of which he succeeded in extracting a great amount of humour and mirth. He also gave "The Midnight Charge" with much power and emphasis. Mr. Raiemond has a confident and easy style with a most natural manner, quietly funny and forcibly passionate; rising to the occasion, when necessary, with fire and action. At the conclusion of each of his pieces he received a hearty recall. The musical part of the programme was in the hands of Miss E. Aloof and Miss Lizzie Evans, Messrs. F. Brown, Wakefield, Reed, and James Budd, and the Luscinian Glee Club as vocalists. Mr. Turle Lee and Miss Alice Aloof were at the pianoforte. Miss Evans sung Blumenthal's "When the House is Still" in good voice and with much pathos, and Mr. Budd sang "The Buccaneer," by Turle Lee, in such excellent style that an encore had to be conceded, while the Luscinian quartette were as usual in splendid voice and met with a warm reception. On the whole a first class evening's entertainment was given.

Miss Rose Seaton gave a Recital at the New Room, St. James' Hall, on February 1. The programme included the oft-repeated "Never, never, never quarrel again" scene from "The School for Scandal," "The Death of Nell," balcony scene from "Romeo and Juliet," selections from "The Belle's Stratagem," &c. &c. In the first piece Miss Seaton's choice was not a happy one; her voice has not that flexibility necessary for such a piece, and the consequence was that she failed to mark with distinctness the characters represented in the celebrated scene. Moreover, a piece which is so often handled with skill by the very best artistes should not be attempted with impunity. In the "Death of Nell" Miss Seaton was much more at home, her voice being more suitable to the touching lines, which were rendered with feeling and pathos. The little piece, "Tired Mothers," was also given very nicely, but the programme in some respects was too ambitious. The recitations were relieved by solos on pianoforte and flute, given respectively by Herr Lehmeyer and Mr. H. Colonieu.

At the Neumeyer Hall on Saturday, Feb. 10, Mr. George Beaumont recited the following pieces:—"The Stowaway" (Clement Scott), "Christmas-day in the Workhouse" (G. R. Sims), "Dream of Eugene Aram" (Hood), "The Convict's Escape" (R. Henry), and "The Legend of Horatius" (Macaulay). Mr. Beaumont's efforts were marked with fair success, although they were occasionally marred by an ill-timed gesture or a little too great a struggle for effect. "The Convict's Escape," which, by the way, was arranged with musical accompaniment, and was one of the most successful of the pieces given, was rather spoilt by the necessary intervention of the voice of the prompter towards the end. In G. R. Sims' piece, and also in the time-honoured "Dream of Eugene Aram," Mr. Beaumont was very good. The reciter was assisted by the following vocalists:—Madame L. Vernon, Mdlle. M. Vagnolini, Miss Laura Clare, Mr. J. Pietroni, Signor H. Frassini and Mr. Alfred Hervay; while Misses H. and L. Goring and A. M. Bertram were at the pianoforte. Mdlle. Vagnolini's two songs were received most enthusiastically, and she deserved much praise for the excellent way in which they were rendered.

The Philothespian Club gave a performance at St. George's Hall on Thursday, February 15, as usual for a philanthropic purpose, the charity on this occasion benefited being St. George's Day Nursery, Campden Hill, W. Sidney Grundy's "In Honour Bound" was first given, in which Mr. H. A. Stacke took the part of Sir George Carlyon, Q.C., M.P., in an easy, finished style, adapting himself to the character admirably. Mr. W. M. Waterton was not so successful as Philip Graham. He seemed nervous, and delivered his lines in a somewhat disjointed manner. Miss Grace Murray's Lady Carlyon was not at all an apt interpretation of the part. The voice assumed was a sort of mournfully tragic one, and was most depressing, quite a feeling of relief taking possession of the listener when she had finished speaking. She sadly misread the character. Miss Murray's performance is rather surprising, as, in a recent representation of "Pygmalion and Galatea," she acquitted herself in a highly creditable manner.

Miss Cruttenden has a very pleasing style, and, as Rose Dalrymple, was bright and vivacious. The piece, being short, was played smoothly, and went very well. Gilbert's "Engaged" formed the second part of the programme, and in this Mr. J. H. Phillips did, as he has often done before, good service for the Club by his clever representation of the principal character of Cheviot Hill. Mr. Phillips' versatile spirit was brought fully into play, and he succeeded in keeping the fun going right through; the peculiar flights of fancy he indulged in regarding the fair sex produced a continuous ripple of merriment throughout the house. Mr. H. Partridge rather suffered by comparison, but his rendering of the part of Belvawney was by no means perfect. Mr. F. Harley's Mr. Symperson was creditable, his make-up good. Mr. L. F. Austin and Mr. A. A. Wickens, as Angus Macalister and Major McGillicuddy respectively, filled the remaining male parts. Mrs. T. C. Collette, as the mercenary Belinda Treherne, was quietly forcible and natural. Miss Webster, as Minnie, was bright and clever, showing off to some advantage the charming simplicity of "Papa's Little Tom Tit." Miss Armstrong, capitally made up, was Mrs. Macfarlane, and Miss E. Rothsay, as the "puir loon lassie," Maggie Macfarlane, assumed the necessary amount of artful innocence to make the character a success. The piece went fairly all through, the extravagantly ridiculous situations being emphasized in such a manner as to sustain the amusement to the end. But, as is too often the case with amateurs, a late start was made, and the lost time increased so much that the final fall of the curtain did not take place until quite 11.40. It was announced that the funds of the charity for which the performance was given would benefit to the extent of about £80 to £90.

Mr. Frederick Wedmore, I see by the advertisements, says that "no performance of 'The Rivals' equal to that now given at the Vaudeville has been seen since the days when all the interest of the English stage was concentrated on a couple of play-houses." Well, the performance at the Vaudeville is a good one,—good enough, I should have thought, to do without this sort of thing; but—unequalled since the days of Shuter and Woodward! *C'est raide!*

Something less than a quarter of a century ago, at any rate, in the palmy-days of the old Haymarket Theatre, "The Rivals," as a regular stock-piece would be presented by the regular stock-company, like this, for instance:—The Sir Anthony would be Chippendale; his Captain, "Young Farren;" his Sir Lucius, Brougham; his Falkland, Howe; his boy, "Little Clark;" and his Acres, a certain Buckstone; while Miss Stirling would appear for Lydia, and Mrs. Poynter for Mrs. Malaprop. Why, Richard Brinsley himself, could he but have revisited the footlights, would have had no fault to find with such a cast as that! Where and when, I wonder, has Mr. Wedmore done his play-going that he is unacquainted with these matters?

On February 1st Miss Alice Cruttenden gave a Recital at Steinway Hall, on which occasion she had the valuable assistance of Miss Cowen, whose pupil she is. The selections included "Two Gentlemen of Verona,"

sc. 2, act i.; "Cyril's Success," sc. 2, act ii.; "Aunt Abigail's Adventure" by R. Henry; Tennyson's "Rizpah," "George Lee," by Hamilton Aïdé, &c. &c. As an elocutionist Miss Cruttenden has some good points, which the pieces selected for recitation were calculated to bring out, but she has yet a great deal to learn. In the first two pieces mentioned above she was assisted by Miss Cowen, and in these scenes the little imperfections in the pupil were brought out rather rudely by comparison with the artiste. One of Miss Cruttenden's best efforts, if not the best, was in the little piece by Hamilton Aïdé, descriptive of the scene at a certain fire in which the hero loses his life in saving that of a woman. This was given with energy and power, and here and there a genuine touch of sympathy and feeling. The recitations were interspersed with songs by Miss Emma Allthsen and Mr. Isidore de Hara, accompanied by Mr. Algernon Lindo on the piano. Altogether, a short but excellent programme was well carried out.

The little *larmoyante* play called "The Cape Mail," in which Mr. Kendal played so splendidly at the St. James's Theatre a few seasons ago, proved so successful in New York when recently acted by some amateurs at Chickering Hall, that Mr. Wallack has decided to produce it at his theatre in conjunction with Mr. Sidney Grundy's "Snowball," after the run of "The Silver King."

I am asked to state that the annual series of Dramatic Performances in honour of Shakspeare's birthday will be held this year at the Memorial Theatre of Stratford-on-Avon, under the direction of Mr. Elliot Galer. For the purposes of this interesting occasion, Mr. William Creswick has been engaged, who will play for two weeks in the "Lady of Lyons," "The Merchant of Venice," "Macbeth," "Henry the Fourth," "The Honeymoon," "King Lear" (on Shakspeare's birthday), and "Richelieu." Mrs. Charles Calvert assists Mr. Creswick in the enterprise. I cannot conceive a more delightful holiday trip than one to Stratford and the Shaksperian country between the 16th and 28th of April, when happily the sun will be shining, the spring flowers out, and this romantic neighbourhood looking at its very best.

At the Mansion House, on March 16, the John Carpenter Club gave an interesting concert of old and new ballads, among the vocalists being Miss Rosa Leo, Miss Winn, Miss Headly, Mr. James and Mrs. Winn; Mr. Whitcher giving some recitations, and Miss Okey some pianoforte selections. Miss Leo's rich contralto was heard to advantage in "Il Segreto," from "Lucrezia Borgia," in which opera, it will be remembered, she appeared with marked success at the Lyceum some months ago. Her rendering of "Charlie is my Darling" was distinguished by that dramatic sense which is such a rarely found quality in ballad singing. Mr. Albert James gave a song of Blumenthal's with great refinement, and Mr. Winn contributed some vigorous and pleasing ballads.

Some flashes of Richard Wagner's quaint dry humour are perceptible in one of his own sketches of his boyish fancies, tastes, and ambitions. "When

I was nine years old," he writes, "nothing pleased me so well as 'Freischuetz.' I often saw Weber pass our house as he came from rehearsal; I ever contemplated him with sacred awe. My tutor, whose regular function it was to explain Cornelius Nepos to me, was obliged at last to consent to give me pianoforte lessons. As soon as I had mastered a few finger exercises, I set to work secretly—and at first without the notes—to learn the 'Freischuetz' overture. One day my tutor happened to hear me practising, and observed that 'I should never do any good.' He was quite right; all my life long I have never been able to learn to play the piano. However, I went on playing for my own sole pleasure—nothing but overtures, and with the vilest fingering imaginable. . . . . My musical occupations were, of course, secondary matters; the chief ones were Greek, Latin, Mythology, and Ancient History. I wrote poems, too. Once a schoolfellow died, and we boys were instructed by our master to write, each of us, a set of verses upon the death; the best of all, he said, should be printed. Mine it was that obtained the honours of type, but not until I had pruned it of many excrescences. At that time I was eleven years old. Nothing would do, naturally, but I must become a poet. I therefore sketched out an enormous tragedy, made up of about equal parts of 'Hamlet' and 'King Lear.' The plot was really most tremendous. Forty-two human beings perished in the course of the piece, and I found myself compelled, in order to render a performance feasible, to bring most of my characters 'on' again as ghosts, as otherwise I should have been short of *dramatis personæ* for my last two acts. I was busy with this play for two whole years. At school (Leipzig) I became idle and knavish. The only thing I cared for was my great tragedy. Beethoven's music to 'Egmont' stirred me so powerfully just then that I resolved not to bring out my play upon any account until it should be set to music of a similar character. I had perfect confidence in my own capacity to write the requisite music, but thought it might perhaps be as well, before beginning to compose it, to enlighten myself with respect to a few elementary laws of thorough-bass. To this end I borrowed Logier's 'Method' for a week, and studied it eagerly, but not with such fruitful results as I had anticipated. The difficulties of counterpoint at once irritated and fascinated me: I resolved to become a musician."

"Meanwhile my huge tragedy had been discovered by my family, and had profoundly saddened them by conclusively proving that I must have thoroughly neglected my schoolwork on its account. Under these circumstances I held my tongue about my new vocation as a musician: but none the less did I furtively compose a sonata, a quartett, and an *aria*. As soon as I felt myself sufficiently matured by my self-imposed musical studies, I made full confession to my people, with whom I had hard battles to fight; for they very naturally regarded my musical yearning as a passing passion—all the more so as it certainly was not based upon any real preparatory study, or even upon a certain amount of faculty in playing upon any instrument. . . . . Just then the July Revolution broke out; instantly I became a revolutionist, and came to the conviction that a man possessed of a grain of energy cannot but be bound to occupy himself exclusively with politics. Forth-

with I began an overture on a political subject, quitted school, and entered the University—not to devote myself to the study of a 'Faculty,' for I felt myself dedicated to a musical career, but to pick up philosophy and æsthetics. I took no advantage whatsoever, however, of this opportunity to improve my education, but plunged into all manner of student excesses, with such frivolity and extravagance that I soon got sick of them. When I came to my senses again, I felt the necessity of recommencing my musical studies at the very beginning, and sticking to them sternly. Providence permitted me to light upon the right man to inspire me with new love for the art, and render it intelligible to me by fundamental instruction. That man was Theodor Weinlig. Under him I studied counterpoint, and learned to know and deeply love Mozart."

Surely a very just complaint is made by the playgoers, who, before the piece of the evening, are condemned to sit out farces, comediettas, burlettas, operettas, or what not, of the most rubbishing description, and acted in a fashion at which even amateurs must laugh. Let us be just in this matter. The best and most fashionable theatres are the greatest sinners in this respect. Where the charges for seats are the highest there appears to be the greatest indifference as to what kind of stuff precedes the play upon which all attention has been bestowed. For instance, is it possible to conceive a more wretched rendering of "The Little Sentinel" than the one given at the Haymarket Theatre, as that was given on the first night of the reproduction of "Caste"? There was no particular demand for "The Little Sentinel," and if it could not be better acted than that, of what value can it possibly be? The piece is known by heart by every amateur in the kingdom, but it has seldom been so gratuitously murdered as at one of the first comedy theatres in the great metropolis. Visitors to the Court Theatre are certainly not treated to a more exhilarating entertainment, for surely "A Happy Return" ought to have been withdrawn the day after it was produced. If ever a little play failed to attract, that one most certainly did. As to "Mock Turtles" at the Savoy, it is a standing joke how anything of the kind can be permitted at a theatre where everything else is so extremely well done. When one-act plays like "Nance Oldfield," written by Charles Reade, are produced—plays full of brightness, point, pungency and humour—they quite startle our friends in the pit by their cleverness. Pittites wonder to themselves why more plays of the kind are not produced, or why authors are not encouraged to write them.

Such plays would be forthcoming by the dozen if managers would only abandon the penny wise and pound foolish policy of refusing to pay for more than one piece in the evening, or of hunting out the cheapest plays for the treasury instead of the most amusing plays for the public. I have before me a little volume of plays excellently suited for acting; they are by Mr. John Maddison Morton, the king of farce writers, the famous author of "Box and Cox," "A Regular Fix," "Betsy Baker," and who shall say how many more of the same laughable kind. The book is called "My Bachelor Days," and other plays, and it can be obtained from the Dramatic Authors'

Society, or from Mr. French, the theatrical publisher in the Strand. In these days, when it is so hard to get an honest laugh, let us get as much of Maddison Morton as we can, who has set an example in the writing of comical dramatic dialogue that few have been able to follow. One suggestion more. We often hear of managers complaining that they have in their company actors and actresses who are walking about with nothing to do. Then let them walk upon the stage, and act to the people who have stood at pit and gallery doors and want to be amused. Pit and gallery demand the best, as well as the stalls and boxes, and it must be very disheartening to open an amusing evening with an entertainment derogatory to the meanest intelligence.

In alluding last month to the German Athenæum in Mortimer Street, its art encouragment, and that famous evening when the clever members gave a parody of the Belt trial before H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, I made a little slip. The judge who presided over this witty court was not Max Hecht, but Herr Heinrich Hertz, a most amusing comedian, and one of the best actors in the club. In fact, in the words of Mr. Gilbert, "he was a judge, and a good judge too." As usual, most of the laughter in court was suggested from the bench. Max Hecht was the counsel for Mr. Goedecker, sculptor and caricaturist in chief, and wrote the parody in collaboration with Heinrich Hertz. May all our evenings be as merry as those spent at the German Athenæum.

On all sides I hear excellent accounts of the acting of Miss Cissy Graham as Mrs. Denver in "The Silver King," now travelling round the provinces. This clever young lady has only hitherto been known in London as an *ingénue*, but she has suddenly developed a strong power of emotional expression, which will be invaluable in romantic and domestic characters.

Mr. Charles Wyndham is certainly a lucky man to have secured the English right of a most amusing play called "Tête de Linotte," originally produced at the Vaudeville Theatre, in Paris, and now occasionally played at matinées during the run of "Fédora." It is written by Théodore Barrière, and is certainly one of the most amusing things of the kind that an ingenious and witty dramatist has ever conceived. There is nothing offensive at all in the matter of the play, and the manner of it will put the greatest of the Criterion successes into the shade. In the second act the stage is divided, half into the common staircase of a flat in Paris, half into the interior of a bachelor apartment; and the manner in which all the characters are either hiding in the room, or scuttling up and down the staircase, is exquisitely ludicrous. For a wonder, too, the last act is almost as good as the first and second: the fun is kept up to the very end. The acting in Paris is wonderfully good. Such a hare-brained, excitable creature as Alice Legault, the flighty wife, who falls in love with her husband's clerk; such a dry, pompous, but wicked-eyed old husband as Michel; such a mild, meek, flustered young lover as Corbin, all belong to the first line of comic art. But the parts could be as well played here, if not better, by Miss Nelly Bromley, Mr. Blakeley, and Mr. Charles Wyndham. And

then the fascinating Portuguese, at the roll of whose fascinating eye the ladies are supposed to collapse, the foreign and fantastic "Masher" of Lisbon, who is played with such harmless exaggeration by Francis—in the hands of Mr. Herbert Standing this droll character would be immense.

The modern *matinée* is the unwholesome outcome of the craze that has befallen society since Mrs. Langtry made a temporary success as an actress. Every impecunious person thinks himself or herself capable of making a fortune on the stage when the ordinary chances of life are played out or obliterated. Scarcely a week passes but the public are summoned to see the feeble and immature efforts of vain women, who have at least some excuse for their excessive ambition, and vainer men, who are so steeped in egotism that reason appears to have temporarily deserted them. Such performances are from first to last worthless. They may suit the dramatic coach or trainer; they may please the fussy ladies who patronize the stage and manufacture benefits; they may be convenient to the hangers-on of amiable incompetency—but, as a test of talent, they are childish and absurd. Genius is not a purchaseable commodity, but genius alone of an extraordinary kind would warrant the overflow of these budding Juliets, these feeble Romeos, these wearisome Julias, and these sucking Claudes, who have tested the patience of their friends and naturally provoked the severity of all who have made a study of the stage. Acting cannot be learned in a day or a week—it cannot be mastered by a course of lessons from any master without they are supplemented by hard work and incessant practice. It will certainly be a bad day for the stage when—for want of a better word—amateurishness is allowed to get a footing on the legitimate stage. There is far too much of it floating vaguely about just now—far too much of it encouraged and petted, and unquestionably there is as much attention paid to flabby feebleness as there is to sound, hearty and robust work. Amateurs are no doubt all very well in their way. They are harmless enough in their own circles, and they only borrow a reflected light from the egotism that is inseparable from the dramatic calling. Indirectly amateurs encourage a love for the theatre; there are no more constant playgoers in existence than your self-satisfied amateurs.

That amateurs should like to go upon the stage is no doubt natural enough, but, if they do so, why not submit to the trying ordeal of a regular public performance, instead of being forced forward to an unwholesome growth by the forcing-house or conservatory process of a *matinée* packed with effusive friends, who are obviously insincere. These people fool the amateur, or the amateur turned actor, to the top of his bent. They tell him he can play anything, do anything, rival any actor or actress who ever lived, until at last the poor victim is led to believe that it is true. The stalls of our metropolitan theatres swarm with detached outposts of mutual admiration societies. Suddenly comes the day when the bubble bursts. The actor or actress tries some part for which they are ludicrously incompetent. The truth is told, and they receive the least pity from those who have flattered them in the most slavish manner. The stage is open to any one, rich as well as poor, but the possession of a testimonial of compe-

tency, signed by society, does not relieve the actor from the necessity of hard and determined application.

"THE WRONG SIDE OF THE STAGE!"

Only a murmur, as the actor died,
From parted lips, yet ripe with laughter, crept.
He wept not for the fading past, nor sigh'd
To leave the present: as we watch'd he slept.
The old, sad smile, softer than any song,
Came back for one short moment, as the cage
Of life was closing; then he spoke: "They're wrong!
"The wrong side of the stage!"

Old, dying friend! were you then wandering
Back to the busy scenes of industry?
Was it some melody you tried to sing,
Or happy memory was passing by?
Did you desire, half-dreaming, to prolong
The fancies of a lifetime, and enjoy,
Once more in recollection, moaning, "Wrong!
"The wrong side of the stage?"

Or was it—yes, it must have been—old friend,
Bright golden mirrors you were looking through?
When all desire of life was at an end
Visions of happiness appeared to you,
And as your tired thoughts were borne along,
From merry childhood to advancing age,
You thought of those you left, and said, "They're wrong!
"The wrong side of the stage!" C. S.

I cannot conceive a more delightful companion these winter nights over a warm fire, and solaced by the pipe of peace, than Mr. Dutton Cook's new volume, or rather two volumes, called "Nights at the Play" (Chatto & Windus). It takes us back through the fields of memory to fifteen years of playgoing with all their change, romance, and adventure, and gives us as complete and accurate a record of the story of the stage between 1857 and 1882 as could well be found. Here we can find tersely related the plots of the various plays we have enjoyed, here we can renew our acquaintance with the actors and actresses engaged in them, and so firm and judicial is Mr. Dutton Cook's style, so little is his judgment biassed by prejudice, or coloured by impetuosity that he is able fearlessly to reprint his criticisms just as they originally stood without any fear of the consequences that ensue from interfering with the natural vanity of the player. Speaking in a certain measure *ex cathedrâ*, I can safely say that it is one of the most unselfish books ever published, for here Mr. Cook presents to the critics of the future the vast stores of his accumulated knowledge and deep reading, thereby enabling them at a very little trouble to become as wise as he is himself. This is scarcely the place to discuss the value of the

author as a critic. His style is well-known to all who are interested in the stage, his judgment carries great weight, and he is held in universal esteem: Quite apart, however, from individual opinion, this book, however, has great value from the fruits of Mr. Dutton Cook's reading that are stored up in these neat yet comprehensive volumes. Whenever a Shaksperian play or old comedy happens to be discussed we find here the essence of what the best writers have written on the subject, and as government officials would call it a *précis* such as no other living writer can give when discussing dramatic matters. Mr. Dutton Cook is unequalled in the art of dramatic *précis* writing, and it is astounding what a fund of information he can contract into a paragraph, and what concentrated thought is conveyed in a sentence. The book is well indexed both nominally and by subjects; it will be interesting to such as take it up only to while away an idle moment, and to live in the past again; to the dramatic library it is absolutely invaluable. Now, if my dear old friend Mr. E. L. Blanchard would only complete the gap between the end of Geneste (1830) and 1857 when Mr. Dutton Cook begins, our dramatic history would be complete. Professor Morley's journal of a London playgoer from 1851 to 1866 is unfortunately out of print, and then, again, it was never published with an index; at any rate, E. L. Blanchard and Dutton Cook might join forces and meet half way between 1830 and 1857, so as to perfect the complete dramatic record.

Under its new President, the new Primate, the "National Society for Preserving the Memorials of the Dead" will begin its year's work well by the restoration of that "forlorn *hic jacet*" in the Eastern Perambulatory of the Cloisters at Westminster, beneath which for some hundred and thirty-five years Anne Bracegirdle has lain at rest. The Church keeps green the memory of saints less real than she, I trow; for though, as Leigh Hunt once said, "her very name sounds like a Venus," Mrs. Bracegirdle was a Saint of the Stage indeed, when such a thing was phenomenal,—a Diana amongst Danaës,—a Gibraltar of virtue that baffled and beat all and ever its besiegers.

A cold-blooded calculating coquette, Macaulay has set her down in one of his off-hand *ipse-dixits;* they who knew her better have left a different judgment upon record. Cold-blooded, quotha! That glowing brunette, who, "whenever she exerted herself had an involuntary flushing in her neck and face;" she whose "lovely height," and dark brown hair and eyebrows, black sparkling eyes, fine white teeth, and famous "fresh blushy complexion" enthused the cynic Aston himself as he described them; she whose beauty was so sympathetic that she never made an exit "but she left the audience in an imitation of her pleasant countenance;"—a woman of this sort would hardly have found "virtue" come constitutionally to her aid under temptation.

And as for "the universal passion," her temptations must have been of the strongest. Now it was the "most fragrant" Robert Leke, Earl of Scars-

dale, who was sighing like a furnace for her, more than half inclined to publicly and bigamously espouse the Dame, and say,—well, say, Confound the Town. Then it was John Lovelace—Jack with his familiars—of Hurley, co. Berks, fourth Baron. Or it was a greater than Jack perchance—William Cavendish, in his blue riband, with the blushing honours of his new dukedom thick upon him. Or it was another K.G., and the future father of another Duke—it was Charles Sackville who came and played his innings; or it was my Lord Halifax, or my Lord Burlington. Who was it not?

The labour of what all these distinguished personages were pleased to call their love, was, as they were all fain to admit by-and-by, but so much labour lost. The resistance they encountered was always effective, and the rather effective that it was always quite frank and good-humoured. This saint had nothing of the Sainte Nitouche about her. Diana knew so well how to take care of herself that she could be merry with an Actæon, as well as wise. This is how, for instance, she served Charles Boyle, Earl of Burlington, one day.

He had sent her that day—with a *billet doux* to introduce it—a present of old Nankin, so old and so precious, indeed, that to have accepted it would have been to be compromised. On the other hand, to return it to its donor was by no means in accordance with Diana's notion of the eternal fitness of things. What was she to do? How wickedly her eyes must have sparkled as she decided. This is what she did. She called up my lord's servant, and demurely told him that there had been a little mistake. The letter, indeed, he had brought was for her; but . . . . but the china was for my lady, his mistress, to whom he must please carry it, as from my lord. To whom, accordingly, he did so carry it. "And," says Walpole, "the Countess was *so* full of gratitude when her husband came home to dinner!" The expression of the Right Honourable Charles Boyle's countenance, when he encountered his Juliana's gratitude across that dinner-table, must have been quite worth seeing.

The Bracegirdle lived to be eighty-five (1663 to September 14, 1718). Did she always manage to hold her own? Did never a cunning fencer of them all get inside her guard? Did the heart so many bled for never bleed for anybody? What would you have? She was but a woman, though a true one and a good one, after all. Once in her life, I take it, she was in love, and with one man always unto her life's end, albeit she survived him some twenty years. He was the wrong man, of course. He was a wit, as brilliant and as hard as the "white diamond ring" he bequeathed to little Lady Mary Godolphin. He was a heartless, sickly, selfish, finnikin, fine gentleman; an acquisitive Secretary for Jamaica, Commissioner of Hackney Coaches, and Commissioner of Wine Licenses. He was William Congreve, Esq., who owed his £1,200 a-year of sinecures to that stage-work his fine-gentlemanship in after years affected to despise.

Congreve had made love to the Bracegirdle in all his pieces. It was he, she was to understand, and not Mr. Williams, who was the real Vainlove to her Araminta,—he, and not Mr. Betterton, who was the Valentine to her Angelica, and the Osmyn to her Almeria; he, and not Mr. Verbruggen, who was the Mirabel to her Millamant. So, nothing loth, one may suppose, the Bracegirdle understood it. But, by-and-by, there was another understanding, and a more definite one, to be come to between Mr. Congreve in his proper person and Mrs. Bracegirdle in hers. What had she been expecting? That he would ask her to marry him? Alas! the author of "The Way of the World" was quite ready to "adore" her, as he had been to adore Anne Jellat or Madame Berenger, or his "angel," Mrs. Hunt. But he craned at matrimony. Instead, he preferred that platonic intimacy with "the young Duchess," Henrietta of Marlborough, the wife *de par le monde* of "that cypher," as Chesterfield called sleepy Francis, second and last Earl of Godolphin.

Diana must have had a bad time before she broke with her unworthy William. Here was the greatest temptation she had known, for she loved this man. She took the right way out of temptation, though. "Pious Belinda," sneered Mr. Congreve,—

"Pious Belinda goes to prayers."

It was almost enough to exorcise such a lover as he was. Yet he had his hopes, in spite of the prayers. The tender fool was in tears at the very thought of his leaving her. But of more than her tears even he could not beguile her. He has given us his own word for that. "Would," cries this exasperated *soupirant* at last, when the situation had become intolerable,—

"Would I were free from this restraint,
Or else had power to win her!
Would she could make of me a saint,
Or I of her a sinner!"

Upon the joint impossibility they parted. He went to dine with his Duchess; she to look after her poor pensioners in the slums about Clare Market.

Rowe—the Laureate of the first George—he, too, they say, had a *tendre* for the Bracegirdle, and "insinuated his addresses" also, through the medium of his stage characters. When she played Selima in his "Tamerlane," Mr. Rowe's feelings were supposed to be expressed by Axalla. When she enacted Lavinia, the author of "The Fair Penitent," spoke "at" her through Horatio. And so on. But when Mr. Rowe spoke the language of love upon his own account, Nicholas appears to have been *éconduit* rather promptly.

Then he avenged himself by a lampoon, in which he styled Diana "a Drab," and averred that her father kept the "Saracen's Head" at

Northampton. Curiously enough, though, this same lampooner, in this same lampoon, becomes, in spite of himself, a witness for the woman he had sat down to insult, and tells us of the proffers large of jewels, plate, and land in fee, which she had with scorn rejected.

Also, that assertion of Mr. Rowe's concerning the landlord of the "Saracen's Head" has not been allowed to pass uncontradicted. On his side, a commentator avers that Diana's father was "Justinian Bracegirdle, of Northants, Esquire, who ruined himself, amongst other ways, by becoming surety for some friends;" not a very publican-like weakness, one would think.

Dorset, Devonshire, and the rest of that set, were men of another kidney. When they were beaten they toasted the defence. The virtue that could resist *them* filled them with honest admiration. And it was not long before their admiration assumed that practical shape which has been apt, at most times, and in most matters, to commend itself to Englishmen. One night Charles Montagu suggested that they might do something better than go on emptying bumpers in the lady's honour. Suppose they made up a purse, and presented it to her as a tangible token of their appreciation? And Halifax put down a couple of hundred guineas to start the subscription. It was a queer notion, but it took. The two hundred was very soon quadrupled, and the next morning the Bracegirdle was presented with perhaps the most solid and unique testimonial to her private worth that an English actress ever received.

The Easter amusements all occurred too late for proper detailed notice in this number of the Magazine. But just before closing the number, I may state that amongst the really good things, and thoroughly well worth seeing, will be found the Snow Ballet at Her Majesty's Theatre, heightened in beauty and poetical significance by the appearance of Ænea, and the admirable dancing of Mdlle. Theodore de Gillert—a born expressionist—and of Mdlle. Consuelo de la Brujere, a new dancer; the charming singing and acting of Miss Florence St. John, who is once more the talk of all London, in the new opera, "La Belle Lurette," at the Avenue; and the acting of Mr. John Clayton, Miss Marion Terry, and Mr. Philip Day, in Mr. Pinero's curious play, called "The Rector," at the Court Theatre. I shall be astonished if all these things are not universally admired.

When melodrama has had its day, romantic drama is likely to come to the front again. It will be a welcome change; and a good play, a really sound and effective play of the "Duke's Motto" order, would be very welcome. This reminds me that Mr. Kyrle Bellew is a most promising candidate for first honours as a romantic actor. He has already appeared as Ruy Blas in the provinces with conspicuous success, and "Ruy Blas," if well done, would be very popular in London. Will any one ever forget Fechter's last act in "Ruy Blas" who ever saw it? That was the perfection of picturesque drama.

THE THEATRE.

May, 1883.

"Talma and the Dramatic Art."

MR. IRVING has earned once more the gratitude of the theatrical world and of the stage-loving people by publishing, for the second time, the translation of Talma's "L'Art théatral."

Whether it is repugnant to unveil to profane eyes the hidden recesses of their heart wherefrom tragic inspiration springs forth, great actors have but rarely given us the benefit of their laborious scrutinies into the working of our moral mechanism. They who not only portray passions but create them within themselves have not yet told us how those tempests arise that stir the soul so deeply, nor whence come the tears and thrills which a great thought, a beautiful sound alone, will evoke within us. As a result, while the action of the brain seems to have unfolded to physiologists all its mysteries, the anatomy of the heart is still shrouded in darkness.

It is a matter of regret that Talma should not have placed his great sagacity and keen observation to the service of such a study, and should have confined his task to the elaboration of a code of tragic acting. As such, however, Talma's pamphlet—though, it must be owned, the present translation does it but scant justice—will fill a broad gap in the literature of the stage. Other arts have their methods, their principles, their code of beauty. The dramatic art alone remains without any defined laws. Hence the unconscious despotism which traditions and great actors have always wielded over the less gifted ones, who, in the absence of all ruling spirit, resign themselves servilely to copy their masters in their every attitude, intonation, and defect.

To these Talma should specially commend himself, for he is the very impersonation of revolt against tyrannical traditions and imitation. With him, they will learn to repudiate masters, and accept but one model—Nature; Nature in her simplicity; to reject the charlatanisms and claptraps of the art; in fine, whatever their effort be, to produce a true effect. They will disdain vile plaudits, obtained by unnatural and intemperate contrasts of sounds, or by forced attitudes, "caviare to the general," to use Shakespeare's words; and they will endeavour to beget that temperance in the very whirlwind of passion which is nectar to the refined whose verdict alone confers greatness.

He will remind them also, that fame is only the reward of the most painstaking labour, and though the born-genius of a Garrick may conquer her, she keeps her smiles for those who unsparingly put an earnest intelligence and true feeling to the service of their art. Le Kain was a striking illustration of fond devotion to his art, and though refused by Nature most of the gifts required to form a great actor, he has left a name which will ever shine in the annals of French tragic art. It is said with truth that faith can remove mountains; it is no less true that she, and she alone, can arm the young against the bitter struggles, the rancours, and the cruel jealousies of stage-life. Talma will inspire them with that conquering faith, by showing her triumphs and her rewards. Take away that faith, acting offers but a discoloured image of Nature; but with her the horizons of the art are widened, it ascends to the same lofty level as other arts; for they have all but one common end, to "hold the mirror up to Nature" with her whole array of passions, fierce, tender and low, from Macbeth to Ariel, down to Falstaff, the demon, the angel, the buffoon. In that region all arts are equal, but if one is truer, more closely reflecting Nature's own features, more universal than the others, it is the dramatic art.

Yet what cruel and unreasonable prejudices still oppress the theatric profession! Is it not at once puzzling and monstrous that, in this classic land of fairness and justice which more than a century ago buried Garrick in Westminster Abbey, close to the greatest of her poets, the mere fact of interpreting the grandest monuments of man's genius should class an actor in a kind of social Bohemia? Why is it that he who cultivates an art which is so intimately connected with all that is noble and beautiful, he

who procures to us our loftiest enjoyments, should be deprived of the consideration which the intelligent or simply successful merchant, the Government clerk, any man in any walk of life, can attain ; let him play his part as an honest man on and off the stage, that consideration will always be grudged to the actor.

Builders of theatres, painters of theatres, managers of theatres, those who write good pieces, those who write bad ones, carry with them their brevet of respectability, but not he who plays those same pieces. Royal dukes consent readily enough to play the violin on the stage in public ; but to play of that other, not less beautiful, instrument, the human heart, would be derogatory indeed !

Young men : be clerks, be tutors, be penny-a-liners, be second or third fiddle in the orchestra even, but go no farther—go not beyond that curtain, on which an unseen hand has engraved Dante's damning lines :—

> Through me you go to the city of tears,
> Through me you go to eternal pain,
> Through me you go to the land of the damned ;
> Abandon all hope, ye who enter.

Napoleon the Great, bold as he was, had but one fit of timidity in his life, and that with regard to the great Talma, whom he affectioned deeply : "I would knight him," did he once say, "if I dared ;" while, at the same time, he was knighting manufacturers, architects, painters, soldiers, and doctors. Napoleon would repeat himself even now, for our prejudices have remained unshaken, and public gratitude is as slow as ever in acknowledging the great services rendered to art by great actors.

Well, we protest against this iniquity, and say that it has had, and will have as long as it lasts, the most fatally lowering effects on that noble art, by excluding from it much of the *élite lettrée*, who, were it not for that fear of losing caste, would give the stage the benefit of rich intellects and elevated feelings.

As things are, how many really lettered gentlemen can the present stage boast of ? The question is best left unanswered.

Is it then to be wondered at that, while we can count painters, sculptors, composers by the score, who have illustrated mankind and their art, we find comparatively so few actors whose names have passed to posterity ?

It is no answer to say that the actor's work dies with him, for the best part of man's glory is built on the verdict of that generation

who has seen his work; and when Dr. Johnson, re-echoing the universal testimony of his time, writes: "Garrick has never found, and never will find, his equal," posterity recognizes, to a great extent, the truth of the judgment. Tragedy in France will ever be associated with Talma. Malibran, Rubini, Lablache will ever shine in the golden book of lyric art; and so long as there are violins the name of Paganini will endure. Of these great inspired ones none has left any work behind, but like certain meteors, who after wandering through our skies with a blinding brilliancy, suddenly disappear into other firmaments, there to find their resting-place among hidden stars, they keep shedding on the earth their soft and warm glow. The names just mentioned, and a few others, would complete the list of the great actors whose names will be handed down through ages.

We know well that Nature is no more prodigal of great actors than she is of great poets; we know the multiplicity of gifts, physical and moral, inborn and acquired, which art demands of a great actor; yet we cannot but think that through the self-imposed abstention of a host of polished and well-read men, the stage must have been deprived of many talented men who would most probably have added much to its greatness.

Athens selected among her best citizens the actors who were to play the tragedies of her poets at the Olympic games; would that, by the removing of our blind notions, the door of the playhouse were made wide open to our best citizens; and we venture to believe that recruits would not be wanting to answer the call, for the stage has fascinations of its own which no other art can offer. There is a kind of rapturous delight for some buoyant spirits in expanding and radiating; an ardent flame burns within them which tends to spread and consume all around them. Nor can any other art better satisfy the thirst of the ideal which torments such natures; but a stroke of the wings, and their spirits soar above in the skies.

The Duc de Guines, the then French ambassador in London, on a visit to his friend, Lord Hedgecombe, at Twickenham, happened once to meet Garrick, who was there as one of the household. Garrick was having tea, and intently occupied spreading some butter on a slice of bread. After being introduced, the ambassador seated himself, and gazed for some time with an expression of mingled surprise and disappointment at the appearance of the modern Roscius.

"Ah!" exclaimed the actor, "Garrick with his bread and butter is rather a disappointment for your Excellence?"

"No, indeed," replied the Duke. "I was only comparing him in my mind to the Garrick of Hogarth as Richard III., dagger in hand."

"In truth," Garrick proceeded, "painters flatter us. They see us as we are on the stage; they give us fine attitudes, and looks of kings. When we are ourselves again, we appear small and vulgar compared to our portraits."

Thus speaking, Garrick rose up. A sudden flash of terrible anger spread over his features, and transfigured him. His brow was knit, the eyes were in flames, the lips quivered, the hair bristled; his very stature seemed to have risen to six feet. The image of Garrick had vanished away: it was Hogarth's Richard III. that stood there.

This faculty of abstracting oneself is essentially of the domain of the dramatic art. A sculptor, while modelling a figure, cannot divest himself altogether of his own nature; he pursues a fugitive image within himself, and invests it with what grace and beauty his mind can receive and reflect. The actor's mind does not receive or reflect; it creates; it acts, and carries him (unconscious, we might almost say) through the fictions of the poet.

Garrick's singular power of abstraction will be furthermore illustrated by the following anecdote. While in Paris he frequently rode out with Preville, an eminent French actor of the day, and both actors whiled away the time by mimicking various characters or parts. Preville had just finished a mimic of a drunken man on horseback.

"Well done," said Garrick; "but legs also should show drunkenness. A drunken man says, 'I am the sun; the world is all turning round about me.' He loses the stirrups; his legs float inert alongside of the horse; his spurs belabour the animal; his hat tumbles off; he drops his whip; his body is rocked to the right and the left, forward and backward. He comes at last to a high stone wall." While thus discoursing, Garrick had been suiting word to action, and acting the part through, when they came to the stone wall. "He wonders what on earth that wall is doing there, and he is determined he shall pass through it." Here Garrick made a

dash at the wall, when the horse reared back and threw his rider off on to the ground.

Garrick was not only reflecting the image of a drunken man, but was to all intents and purposes as drunk as he meant to represent him to be.

Rubini affords another instance of this extraordinary faculty of dividing mind and soul in two, so to speak. Asked at a gathering of friends to sing, he consented on the condition that he could sing in an adjoining room where card-playing was going on, his hearers remaining outside. He then sang the cavatina of the third act of the "Sonnambula"—

"Il pui tristo frai mortali."

And all eyes were filled with tears, so touching was the rendering. When at the end his friends came up to express to him their admiration, they were amazed to find him seated at the card-table, where he had been playing through the whole of the cavatina. This effort of mental division was, he confessed, the most painful he had experienced.

Fanny Kemble held the stage in horror; plaudits offended her, her name on a bill was an insult to her; but no sooner had she set foot on the boards than she was seized by tragic inspiration, as if intoxicating vapours had sprung forth from beneath her.

Strange indeed are such natures—puzzles to the closest scrutiny! They possess, as it were, two souls; the one attached to this earth, the other inhabiting the azure space of fiction. By fiction, we do not mean fantasy more or less shadowy and unreal. To the great actor truth must be the very essence of fiction, and so great is his craving for it that he often submits himself to moral tortures to attain it. Theodorus, the great Greek actor, when playing in the "Electra" of Sophocles, would substitute for the urn supposed to contain the ashes of Orestes, the urn containing the remains of his own son, thus laying bare his own sore heart to bring forth accents of true sorrow. Talma, on learning the news of the death of his deeply beloved child, caught in the glass the image of his pain-stricken face, and, amid sobs, exclaimed—"Would to God this expression of sorrow would imprint itself on my features;" and he confessed that ever after, when he had to act intense pain and despair, he would evoke the image of his departed child.

In the presence of such deeds of heroism, we think sculptors

and painters insult tragedy and comedy by representing her always masked. On these summits she has no mask—she shows us her plain features.

Those who wear a mask, those who travesty themselves, are elsewhere than on the stage. It is comedy that exposes them, and, in conclusion, we hope the time is near when she will destroy that last of our social masks, our prejudices which have too long oppressed her.

E. A. Mathieu.

Little Bet.

(A LANCASHIRE BALLAD.)

'TIS a year just to-day, John, we lost little Bet,
An' aw cannot help cryin' a bit,
For there's mony a time aw feel lonely an' fret,
When thou'rt gone to thi work at the pit;
An' the snow keeps a falling on yon little grave,
Till it does seem so selfish and hard
For us two to be here, snug i' comfort at home,
An' her laid i' that cruel churchyard.

Sich a bright, bonny babby as noan nivver see'd,
Wi' her nice little cuddlin' ways,
John, if thou'd been a drinker aw'm sure aw'd ha' dee'd
For mi love for that bab wur a craze;
Them snowflakes fall heavy an' cold on my heart,
When aw feel that they're fallin' on her,
Tho' aw know 'at it's foolish to take it like that,
Still aw fret till aw hardly con bear.

T'other childer is good uns, but both on 'em's lads,
Tho' aw love 'em for that noan the less,
Still aw felt as if Johnny an' Jim were their dad's,
An' that this one were mine to caress;
'Twur a new soort o' care, an' a new soort o' pride,
Were this bright little cuddlin' girl,
Different cloas to mak', summat gentler to bide,
An' sich nice little ringlets to curl.

An' aw reckoned hoo'd grow up a fine, stirrin' lass,
One as thou'd ha' been proud on, my lad,
An' ha' helped me at home, while the lads were at work
I' the pit, takin' share wi' their dad;
But it were not to be, an' aw'm silly to cry,
Though hoo were sich a sweet, pretty gem,
For them lads is sich rosy an' healthful young romps
Aw must larn to be grateful for them.

Think like that, Mary, lass, weren't aw crazy mysel
When yon chilt took the fever an' died?
But aw see'd thou were crushed—more than ever thou'd tell,
And it browt me still nearer thi side;
Aw were crazed o'er our Bet—but aw were frightened for thee,
For aw couldn't lose both, bonny wife,
An' when thou took the fever, an' bid fair to dee,
How aw worked aw can't think for mi life.

But thou pulled bravely through, an' when th' lads did so beg
To come whoam from their granny's to thee,
An' aw see'd thy lost look, when thou miss'd little Bet,
When them lads cried, their mammy to see;
An' aw know'd thou were cryin', wi' th' lads i' thi arms,
For the little lass gone to her rest,
An' aw bent down an' kiss'd thee, an' begged thee be strong
For my sake an' the lads on my breast.

Dunnot fret thee, my Mary, aw'm steady an' true,
An' my heart beats wi' thine i' thy grief,
Come sit closer by me, an' aw'll kiss them sweet tears,
For they bless thy poor heart wi' relief;
Tho' the snowflakes are fallin' on yon little grave,
Where we laid her a year since to-day,
Little Bet does not heed them, but prays for us both,
Where the sun shines for ever and aye.

BRANDON THOMAS.

The Last of "Caste."

Friday, April 13, 1883.

A MORE "inexorable law" than that on which Captain Hawtree will wax Mephistophilean no more—the law which decrees all things must have an end—has decreed the end of "Caste;" and, so far as the original holders of the acting rights are concerned, upon the most happily conceived, the most brilliantly interpreted, the most perennially popular little play in the Robertsonian repertory, the curtain has come down for ever.

It fell with all the honours. The changes and chances of this mortal life have not spared to us the little company for whom the piece was originally written, and some names, alas! stand to the old parts no longer. Yet the new Eccles provoked Homeric laughter. The new Marquise was a famous artist of the old school, which is the good school, and the new Esther was the best Esther seen since the first widow of the first George wore the weeds in Tottenham Street. And then, there was still the first and only Hawtree, still the alpha and omega of Pollies, and, once more, her own original Gasman come back loyal as ever to the love he vowed her sixteen years ago.

To see the last of these old favourites in the characters which, in their hands, have grown to be the leading characters in the piece, such an audience as the new Haymarket has not yet held, packed the theatre from floor to ceiling. The customary atmosphere of the place—a serene atmosphere of polite pococuranteism—was surcharged for the occasion with electric sympathy of the most explosive character. That presently found a vent in the thundrous welcome which taxed even the practised nerves of the coolest of "Cool Captains," which turned Polly's fine laugh to something like a sob, and staggered for half a minute the sturdy mental equilibrium of Mr. Samuel Gerridge. After that, it must suffice to record, amidst demonstrations, rather more subdued, of interest extraordinary, the play was played as, assuredly, it will never be again. And then came what we were all there to have a share in—then came the good-by.

It was a memorable "function." It was to lose Hawtree; it was to see Sam no more; but, above all, it was to lose Polly. I doubt if she will soon forget what her leave-taking was like.

There was once a famous English actress who could say, as simple matter of fact: "I am a public concern." What the Oldfield of that day could say of herself, the Oldfield of our day has had said to her by her public before now, but never with the emphasis of this night, when, hand in hand with her husband and her old comrade, she stood upon a stage piled high with flowers; and when, across those flowers—the whole house rising at her—with abnormal gesticulation and never-ending shouts on one side, and with something more eloquent than words on hers, good-by was said between us.

So they pass from before our eyes for ever from to-night into the Shadowy Land—George and Esther, Polly and Sam, magniloquent Marquise, unspeakable Eccles, ineffable Hawtree—old acquaintances, not to be forgot.

And brought to mind, surely, again to-night by some of us on both sides of the curtain were three old acquaintances, gone further from us still, across the "Great Divide," into the other world—the first and best D'Alroy of them all, out of whom the death-trap, called a railway smash, was to crush the life; and the first and most inimitable Eccles, struck down almost on the stage, and in this very part; and "though last, not least in love," the tender man with the kind eye and the humorous mouth, the cynical tongue and the soft heart—the man, an' it please you, who wrote this same "Caste," and also further increased the public stock of harmless pleasure—he to whom the first success of this piece meant present ease, and fame and fortune close—the end of a very long climb; rest now, and, yonder, Canaan. Aye; and who died upon that Pisgah-top, with the promised land in sight.

W. F. Waller.

Half-Way !

HAVE you forgotten where we stood
Between the lights, that night of spring,
The river rolling to the flood,
So sad the birds, they dared not sing?
No love was ever dream'd like this,
Beneath the shadows of the park,
Between a whisper and a kiss,
Between the daylight and the dark !

There had been trouble—this was rest ;
There had been passion—this was peace :
The sunset dying in the west
Made Nature sigh and whispers cease.
I only felt what I had found,
You only knew what I would say ;
But nothing broke the peace profound
Between the darkness and the day !

How will it end? I cannot tell,
I asked it many months ago,
Before the leaves of autumn fell,
And chang'd to winter's waste of snow.
Yet we stand watching at the gate
Of summertime for promise—hark !
No, love, 'tis nothing ! we must wait
Between the daylight and the dark !

C. S.

April, 1883.

Plays in Paris.

WHILST M. Perrin, of the Comédie Française, is tearing his hair with vexation for having allowed M. Auguste Vacquerie's "Formosa" to escape him, after having had it for more than seventeen years neglected and dust-covered in his pigeonholes, M. La Rénouat, of the Odéon, is rubbing his hands with glee at having scored at last a success, which, let me add at once, is thoroughly well-deserved, both as regards the literary value and the play itself, and the untiring efforts of the presiding genius of the second Théatre Français in giving every applicant, be he young or old, with the least pretension to talent, a chance of being heard. But apart from the immediate pecuniary results of M. La Rénouat's own ungrudging encouragement of untried merit—ably and generously seconded by his partner, M. Posel, the well-known and favourite actor—this incident of M. Perrin abandoning a trump-card to his humbler but far more amiable competitor, is likely to have a beneficial influence upon theatrical art in general in France. From the time of Alexandre Dumas the elder's débuts as a playwright down to our own days, it has been gradually but surely become patent to those interested in the matter that the doubtful chances of a "show" in the house at the Rue de Richelieu are no longer worth the period of weary waiting, the supping full of humble pie, the almost hopeless task of pleasing the hydra-headed management of the "first theatre in Europe," that seem to be the inseparable conditions of effecting an entrance there. Even the reason the young author gave when asked why he had taken his first play to the Comédie Française, "Because it was the handiest to his home," will no longer hold good with any except the most inexperienced. The others are getting to prefer the tactics of the knowing pedestrian, who walks briskly to the farther end of his proposed journey to return by express train to his home and rest, if the Théatre Français has still the right to be called a haven of rest, seeing that it is fast becoming a bourn to which no traveller-playwright willingly returns after having sojourned beneath its roof once; for even such men as Octave Feuillet, Alexandre Dumas fils, Edouard Pailleron, and Emile Augier are

plainly perceiving that, from a monetary point of view as well as from more noble motives, the game of being played at the Comédie Française only supplies candles, whilst at other houses it supplies duplex lamps, gas, and luxuries to boot. A success at the house of Molière means three nights' author's rights per week at the utmost, whilst a success at the Vaudeville or Gymnase means a hundred nights straight off the reel. Under those conditions the reaching of three figures at the former becomes almost as difficult of accomplishment as the proposed journey of Mark Twain on the glacier, which moved no doubt, but only a quarter of an inch every four-and-twenty hours. Add to this, that should you happen to be shelved, for one reason or other entirely unconnected with the success of your work, and most often owing to some act of arbitrariness, you are likely to be forgotten or neglected for a quarter of a century or so, as happened to M. Emile Augier with his "Effrontés," who, in order to have his masterpiece revived after two-and-twenty years, had to threaten to do what M. Auguste Vacquerie effectually did—namely, carry it to the Odéon. As it is, "Les Effrontés" keeps the bill two or three nights a week, though for how long one knows not, seeing that a revival of "Les Démoiselles de St. Cyr," one of the elder Dumas' least successful productions, is announced for the end of this month, and that "Une Matinée de Contrat," a comedy by an almost unknown author, M. Desvallières, is in rehearsal.

The most interesting event, however, of the season at the Rue de Richelieu are the farewell performances of M. Delaunay previous to his retirement from the stage. They began on the 5th of April, and will end in May, during which period M. Delaunay will appear in every *rôle* he played at the Comédie Française. M. Delaunay is fifty-eight years old. Having passed thirty-five years on the boards he now leaves for good, in the portrayal of *jeunes premiers*, his finish of which, from a French histrionic point of view, must be pronounced as unsurpassed and unsurpassable, perhaps matchless. Whether his love-making was always done to Nature is a question open to grave discussion, especially with those who do *not* hold with Lessing's theory, "that Art should not step beyond certain bounds in her too servile reproduction of Nature." He would have never dared, in order to be natural, to throw or knock down a woman in the representation of jealousy bred from unrequited or ill-requited love, as did Fechter in the "Dame aux Camelias;"

though, in justice be it said, even Fechter absolutely refused to comply with the young author's injunctions, and to depart from the chivalric manner of wooing or vilifying woman traditional on the French stage, until carried away by the excitement of the overwhelming success of a first night.

But it may safely be asserted that M. Delaunay would have never been so carried away, or that if he had been, his fear of innovation and the censure of the public would have got the better of his desire for originality. He was essentially the lover of the *ancien régime*—easy, elegant, polished—but he never forgot that between himself and his audience there was, not an orchestra (for there is none at the Français), but the footlights, that invested the most commonplace incidents to be represented with a poetical glamour which, with Frenchmen especially, told better than the closest imitation of Nature—perhaps because Frenchmen are the least poetical of all human beings. I would not say so much for Frenchwomen; for more than one, the best and highest bred, saw through his art—proof whereof a story, related to me some eight years ago by one of M. Delaunay's friends, for the truth of which I vouch.

One evening, after a brilliant performance of De Musset's "On ne badine pas avec l'Amour," a card bearing a noble name was brought to M. Delaunay's dressing-room, the owner requesting a moment's conversation, which was granted. The visitor entered at once upon his business. "I have just seen you play Perdican, M. Delaunay, and if you can teach me how to enact a similar love scene I am willing to pay your own terms." The young noble was about to ask the hand of an orphan girl of equally high birth, and, as the lady was of age, the matter could not be arranged, as these matters generally are, by a formal demand of the parents or guardians. In addition to this, the girl had pretensions of being loved for herself, and of being told so *vivâ voce*. M. Delaunay consented to give the lessons, and in a few days the pupil, who was naturally bright and clever, performed very creditably. Too creditably, in fact, for when the crucial test came, the lady simply answered, "I would fain believe in your protestations, but they smack of the footlights; they remind me of nothing so much as of M. Delaunay's charming acting. The woman who could be beguiled into giving herself to a man by such perfectly uttered sentiments must be

either a fool or a poetess—I am neither." It is needless to say that there was no marriage between the couple.

Some people are born old; others would continue to be and look young if they lived as long as Dr. Parr. To this latter category belongs M. Léo Délibes, the composer of "Lakmé" (produced at the Opera Comique on the 14th of April). As I sat watching him two nights previously at one of the general rehearsals—different from the dress rehearsal—conducting his work without the aid of a bâton, my mind travelled back some four-and-twenty years, when I used to meet him at *déjeuner* at a little *crèmerie* in the Faubourg Ponsonnière, near the Conservatoire. Of all the noisy, rollicking youngsters, playing practical jokes upon the dear, kind, old Norman hostess (who, in spite of her thirty years' residence in Paris, was still as much a peasant as when she arrived at the *barrière* for the first time), young Délibes was one. There were mornings when he was comparatively quiet, when the stock of practical mischief had been temporarily exhausted outside upon others than upon the *habitués* of the *crèmerie*, when he related his exploits, shaking his mane like a playful young lion, to his familiars. Even then he was no longer unknown, for at eighteen he had written a lyrical nightmare, entitled "Two Sons of Charcoal," and, what is more, it had been played with a certain amount of success. Philippe Gille—one of the joint authors of the libretto of "Lakmé"—and he, were already fast friends. They met one morning at Victor Massé's, whilst the latter was composing "La Reine Topaze," and since then they had become inseparable. Délibes himself was *accompagnateur* at the Théâtre Lyrique, where Gille had succeeded Jules Verne as secretary. Gille always swore that it was Délibes who had made him lose his place at the Hôtel de Ville, by coming into the office at all times to sing to him the *motifs d'operette* he had found during the night or the morning, to the great annoyance of the sober-minded and steady-going employés.

Then the young men went out arm-in-arm discussing their plans, often remaining for hours standing still in the streets to sing to each other, or else catching sight of Meyerbeer on the boulevards and following him—petrified with respect, to use an expression of Délibes—as Flaubert, the author of "Madame Bovary," and Louis Bouelhet followed a live-long day Honoré de

Balzac in the streets of Rouen—until Meyerbeer, polite to every one, turned round now and then to bow to them, under the impression that they were two young journalists, who were watching his movements to make copy out of.

Délibes, as I have told you, was at that time *accompagnateur*—read chorus master—at the Théâtre Lyrique, and a curious *accompagnateur* he must have been, always rushing in at the last moment. It was he who had to play the organ in the cathedral scene of Gounod's "Faust," but M. Hector Salomon, being in a constant agony lest Délibes should be too late, had to instal himself every night before the organ in order—to get up again, for, out of breath, with dishevelled hair, there was young Délibes, not a moment too soon, but not a moment too late.

Léo Délibes is still what he was then, the real gamin de Paris, plus the accident of genius, notwithstanding his forty-seven years. His score of "Lakmé" brings you back to the palmiest days of French Opéra Comique, to the days of Auber and Herold and Boieldieu, the music of which the *ouvrier* still sings over his work. If I were to begin picking out the charming numbers, I should find myself in the dilemma of Madame de Sevigné when she began selecting the best of Lafontaine's fables. She found there were none left to pass a qualified judgment upon. Remember, I am speaking from the amateur's, not from the musician's, point of view. That more difficult task must be left to other hands, but I doubt if even the learned will find much to condemn.

I know a dramatic critic and *chroniqueur*—the functions are generally distinct, but he discharges them both—on one of the leading Paris journals, who, at the time of Sarah Bernhardt's return from her American journey, made a bet that he would keep her name out of his copy for the period of one month. Mme. Bernhardt got wind of the wager, and swore that she would make him lose it. She kept her word. Mme. Bernhardt is to the theatrical journalist in Paris what the head of Charles the First was to Mr. Dick. He cannot keep her out of his writings. Most of us have left off struggling against the inevitable. What, after all, can one do with a woman who, not content with her world-wide reputation as a tragedienne, aspires to be a painter, a sculptor, an aëronaut, an authoress—her Memoirs will appear at

the end of the year—a *pierrot*—she is to play, in a pantomime expressly written for her, at a special benefit—and a manageress of as many theatres as she can possibly obtain the lease of. She is ubiquitous and all-pervading. Though at the moment of my writing she is prevented by a sudden loss of voice from playing "Fédora" at the Vaudeville—which, *en passant*, was taken off on the 20th of April to make room for a revival of "Tête de Linotte"—I saw her the other night in her new theatre, the Porte St. Martin, the management of which she inaugurated by the production of Adolphe Belôt's "Pavé de Paris" (14th of April), a sensation play in twelve tableaux.

M. Belôt's piece is a very good one of its kind, and has, besides, the merit of original execution of a hackneyed plot. The triumph of virtue is accomplished by the recommendable device of appealing to that better part of human nature which metaphysicians tell us is not entirely absent even in the most wicked. The situation in which the final conversion of an honest man about to become a villain is brought about is, as far as I know, thoroughly novel, and shows the tendency of even melodramatists to profit, though in their own way, by the naturalism which M. Zola has been preaching for years. The scenery is altogether very capital, and a long run seems to be in store for "Le Pavé de Paris."

But, however good, melodrama is not Madame Bernhardt's aim at a theatre where she has promised to act herself for at least two hundred nights of the year. "Frou-Frou" is already announced, then will follow a drama by Victorien Sardou in the style of "Patrie," after which, from among the four or five manuscripts read and accepted, a drama in verse by M. Jean Richepin, the famous author of "La Chanson des Gueux."

Poor, or rather happy, M. Richepin, who seems to be the latest victim of Sarah Bernhardt's peculiar propensities. I should be sorry to make these pages a vehicle of chronicling scandal, but it is by this time an open secret that the enchantress has bewitched him, that he will play the title *rôle* in his "Nana Sahib," that he will be seen lying at Sarah's feet in a floating tunic, with bare arms and legs, juggling with golden balls.

That good old Count de St. Simon—not to be confounded with the writer of the Memoirs—who dreamt of the regeneration of the

nineteenth century by means of an economic revolution, came one day to Madame de Staël. "Madame," said he, you are the most wonderful woman in the world, as I am its most original man. We'll live together, for we cannot fail to procreate a phenomenal being." "Though perfectly accustomed to the most outrageous proposals," says Louis Veuillot, who is just dead, "though she had as many lovers as the Grand Turk had mistresses, Madame de Staël showed this cynical philosopher the door."

Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis.

The remainder of my news must be chronicled very briefly. The Bouffes Parisiennes has revived "The Mascotte," neither "Gillette de Narbonne" nor "Les Mousquetaires au Couvent" being sufficiently attractive to fill the coffers. The Palais Royal seems to have scored a moderate success with "Le Fond du Sac," a kind of "Goose with the Golden Eggs," in three acts. It is by the author of "L'As de Trèfle," and was studied, underlined, and produced in twenty-one days after the failure of "Peau Neuve." There are some clever bits. At the Gaieté, "The Roi des Grecs" has made room for a semi-military, wholly patriotic spectacular play, "Le Bourgeois de Lille." At the Gymnase, "M. le Ministre" of M. Claretie was played for the last time on Thursday, April 19. The next day the première of "Le Père de Martial," by M. Albert Delpit, the author of "Le Fils de Coralie." Too late for notice. The Folies-Dramatiques has a success in "La Princesse des Canaries," bought, I am told, by Mr. Michael Gunn, to follow "La Belle Lurette," which is being revived at the Renaissance, Madame Chaumont being unable to appear any longer in "La Cigale," owing to a diseased knee. The Athenée Comique, so well beloved of Parisians, though too rarely frequented by Englishmen, closed its doors for good on the 31st of April. The building is but eight-and-twenty years old, but its proprietor, M. Raphael Bischopheim, wants it for other purposes. One or two clever things at the minor theatres, especially at the Cluny, "Les Parisiens en Province," the plot of which resembles in every respect a play I saw at the Royalty under the management of Miss Kate Lawler. Mr. Righton enacted the principal part, a London tradesman, who pines for the delights of the country, but is heartily glad to come back to town.

Kind and generous Mr. Gilbert, who sent back the tickets to

Mr. Buckstone, reminds me of an episode in the life of Alexandre Dumas the elder, with this difference, that the Frenchman anticipated his share for a long while by selling them before his first piece had been produced. It was the first money he received in connection with his stage work. The custom still prevails in Paris. M. Sardou receives something like two hundred francs' worth a week.

Joachim and Sarasate.

By Marie Corelli.

THERE is an old legend, graceful and poetic as all the legends of Greece are, which relates how two nightingales dwelling in the same forest once contested with each other for the supreme victory of song. They sang—each with a different motive. One sang for the love of his bonnie brown mate, whose bright eyes peered from a cluster of green leaves whereon the moonlight played with the fitful shadows: his song was of Love. Of tenderness, of passion, of that mysterious and potent sympathy that alone can beautify and make glad the life of man, and without which the fairest of earth's possessions crumbles to dust in our grasp—of faith, of hope, of purity and peace, the enchanting bird warbled "in full-throated ease," forgetting himself and the green woods around him in the earnestness and fervour of his melodious pleading, and only remembering that love and music purified the air and sanctified the world. And suddenly, crossing the current of his delicate harmony, the other nightingale commenced his song, with notes that were full, round, and rich, and tones that pierced with ringing triumph the deep cool heart of the forest—nobly and sweetly he sang indeed, but not for Love—his song was of Glory. Stronger and fuller rang the wild far-reaching music of his voice till it seemed as if the gentle lover-nightingale must have spread his wings and fled away forlorn, baffled and shamed into silence. Surely no song of love could compete with that victorious outburst of melody that chanted the splendours of immortal Fame? Nay—but listen!

"Oh hush, oh hush! how wild a gush of rapture in the distance,
A roll of rhymes, a toll of chimes, a cry for love's assistance,
A sound that wells from happy throats,
A flood of song where beauty floats,
And where our thoughts, like golden boats, do seem to cross a river."*

The bird of Love recommenced his tender strain, modulated to infinitely greater tenderness—he poured out his passion in far more passionate pleadings, and regardless of his rival, sang on and on to his bonnie brown mate till she could no longer resist his sweet entreaties, and fluttering to him, she nestled close to his downy wing, contented. And a deep stillness reigned through the woodland, for the bird of Fame sang no more. Some say he perished from disappointment and envy of his rival's beautiful voice—others state that he wandered through many countries, singing now and then in sad broken notes of despair and loneliness—but all agree in asserting that he never was happy. For happiness only dwells where Love is, and the artist or poet who works only for self-glory has lost the way to the palace of perfect joy.

This old Greek legend of the nightingales came back to my mind the other night when Sarasate fascinated a crowded audience at St. James's Hall, and excited such a clamour of enthusiastic applause as is seldom heard in London concert-rooms. This graceful Southerner, with the warm light of warmer climes glowing in his kindly eyes, with his small slight figure, supple as a wand of willow, and his mobile changing countenance full of intellectual force and expression—what is the moving spring of his marvellous genius? Not fame—for his enormous reputation is treated by him with the merriest *insouciance*. Not love of money, for he has private means of his own which are sufficient to satisfy any man of a reasonable mind. Not desire for honours, decorations, or courtly flatteries—he cannot boast of being "Dr." Sarasate; he is Sarasate *pur et simple*—Sarasate *e il suo Violino*—Sarasate and his dainty companion, his obedient, docile friend and *confidante*, the little instrument so fragile in make, so light to carry, so apparently nothing to look at, and yet which in his hands becomes a pleading angel, a repentant fairy, a rapturous skylark, a sobbing child, a sighing wind, a storm on the ocean, a cry of love, a kiss of parting—anything and everything in the whole range of human emotions that can be expressed by sound.

* From a poem entitled "The Waking of the Lark," by G. Eric Lancaster.

For many years the musical world has respectfully doffed its hat to that other great violinist, Herr Joachim, and still must Joachim be acknowledged as one of the greatest artists that ever lived. The tone he produces is fine and full, and his execution is nearly faultless, while (though unfortunately he was not always in correct tune the last time he played in London) he possesses a most perfect ear. We are all familiar with his manner of playing—it is careful, studied, profound and finished. In truth, he is perhaps the most perfect performer on the violin we have. But mark the words *performer on the violin*. Sarasate can scarcely be called a *performer* on the instrument ; it may be said of him as it was said of Paganini, that he is himself a human violin. At any rate, he makes his instrument a part of him, and he holds his bow as if it were a slender lily he had gathered *en passant* to play with. The action of it is very like that of a slight flower swaying in the wind, and yet with what concentrated nervous energy and passion it is wielded ! Sarasate himself sways to and fro with the rise and fall, the ebb and flow of the music he performs ; now Joachim never descends to what he would certainly term affectation of movement and gesture. There he stands, dignified and respectable, a noble study of artist and man, taking without any fuss the pre-arranged terms for certain seasons offered him by Messrs. Chappell and Co., and playing for those terms in a learned, scientific, and artistic manner of which too much cannot be said in praise. But the wilful Sarasate, what of him ? He will not "farm himself out," as the saying is, to anybody, and for no terms will he play if he does not feel in the humour. He will stay indoors a whole day testing strings for his beloved instrument. Waste of time ? Not at all. What expectant bridegroom will not gladly pass a whole day in turning over the choicest gems of a jeweller's store, in order to find the exactly suitable gifts wherewith to adorn his bride on her marriage morn ? Sarasate weds his violin each time he plays, and it behoves him to see that his marriage offerings are appropriate. And if the strings were not perfectly in unison, it would be a sheer impossibility to dash off those brilliant and wonderful harmonies which glisten like so many points of vivid light in the rainbow radiance of a Beethoven Symphony or a Mendelssohn Concerto, harmonies so clear, bell-like, and pure, that one listens to them half-bewildered, thinking that there must be some fairy violin in the distance, echoing Sarasate's wonderful

variations. Joachim, too, is a skilful master of harmonics; but his harmonics do not take us by surprise—they do not leap living, as it were, from the instrument—they simply assert themselves delicately, as the satisfactory results of long and arduous study. Sarasate's harmonics live, breathe, and burn; and it would be difficult to surpass the power and passion of the yearning notes in Chopin's "Nocturne," as played by Sarasate on the fourth string. Unconscious tears fill the eyes, and the heart beats quicker with pleasure akin to pain. One is reminded of Tennyson's lovely lines:

> "Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,
> Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes."

The difference between Joachim and Sarasate, from an artistic point of view, seems to me to consist chiefly in temperament. The one is a profound thinker and a man of culture; the other is a child of genius and Nature. The one has studied earnestly and deeply, and maintains an attitude of composure and self-restraint, which are often the attributes of conscious power; the other is glad and sensitive, and is full of the joyous *abandon* which pertains to the soul that can free itself at will from the trammels of the world, and float serene in a realm of its own imagining. Both men are great, both are deservedly honoured and admired, both merit the profoundest reverence of all musicians, living and to come; and the distinction between them (after the one I have mentioned of temperament) is easily to be observed by any thinking musician who will take the trouble to consider the matter impartially. It is simply this: Joachim has conscientiously *learned* his art; Sarasate has enthusiastically *loved* it. "Love, love, my child!" said the father of Aurora Leigh, in Mrs. Browning's beautiful poem; and this is what Art says to those who desire to serve her best. There are some, like Joachim, upon whom she looks with grave contentment and dignified encouragement; but only for those who love her with their inmost heart of hearts, like Sarasate, does the divine goddess consent to smile and become sweetly familiar. At this epoch she holds two wreaths—one of laurel, the other of myrtle. And to Joachim she accords the laurels, saying, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant;" but Sarasate she crowns with myrtle, and needs to say no word, for well she knows his love is greater than can be her praise. Both the wreaths she gives are fair, both are fadeless—but myrtle leaves are more fragrant than laurels.

Our Musical-Box.

CARL ROSA is that rarest of phenomena amongst operatic *impressarii*—a man of his word. Some weeks ago, when he announced his "short season" at Drury Lane, he promised the London musical public two absolute novelties of native growth; and he has fulfilled his pledge to the letter. Mr. A. G. Thomas's "Esmeralda" and Mr. A. C. Mackenzie's "Colomba"—both full-sized operas in four acts—have been produced upon the boards of the "National" Theatre with the splendour, taste, and completeness that generally characterize Mr. Rosa's *mises-en-scène*. This company, although it no longer includes Miss Julia Gaylord and one or two other public favourites who strengthened it last year, is a thoroughly efficient one, enabling him to fill all the parts in the new opera, subordinate as well as leading, with artists of recognized merit. With respect to the excellences or defects of those works, views may and, as a matter of fact, do differ; but there can be only one opinion as to the "cast" of executants entrusted with their presentment to the public ear and eye. If there be any flaws in the artistic cuirass of Mr. Rosa's enterprise, they are so insignificant as to be scarcely worthy of special notice. Nothing in this world appertaining to humanity, whether by accident or arrangement, is perfect; and the English Opera Company cannot hope to evade the common lot. But, at least, it steadfastly keeps the highest aims in view, and unremittingly strives to attain them, which is quite as much as can be reasonably expected from a corporate body made up of heterogeneous and, too frequently, conflicting elements. With the solitary exception of the Stadt-theater at Hamburg, there is not, to the best of my knowledge and belief, a Continental Opera-house at the present moment provided with as good an all-round company as that recently performing at Drury Lane, which, by the way, can give "two stone and a beating" to the Hamburg house in the matter of their respective orchestras.

"Esmeralda" is a musical work of considerable beauty and interest, sweet rather than forcible, more remarkable for cleverness

of construction and exquisite finish of detail than for originality, either in conception or treatment. Lacking vigour and *entrain* wherewith to take a critical audience by storm, it is supremely successful in insinuating itself into its hearers' good graces. Although "Esmeralda" is not pervaded by "endless melody," after the Wagnerian manner, it is continuously tuneful. Mr. Thomas's songs, duets, and concerted pieces are not separated from one another, each in its distinct musical frame, as obviously as are similar numbers in the operas of Gounod and Ambroise Thomas, composers from whom he has derived the majority of his inspirations. They are, however, unquestionable songs, duets, &c.; every one of them is duly provided with a manifest beginning and an unmistakable end; whilst one or two are so clearly and simply outlined as to be available for drawing-room use. To this category belong two charming airs, "O fickle, light-hearted swallow" (act i.), and "What would I do for my Queen?" (act iv.). Every now and then, moreover, Mr. Thomas writes quite delightfully for the chorus, conspicuously so in the first and fourth acts, in which, beyond doubt, he has put forth greater strength and more copious invention than in the second and third. The *ensembles*, "Hail, realm of pleasure," "Bless you, bless you," and "Hoay, hoay" (an odd English travesty of the French "Ohé, ohé!") are admirable compositions of their kind. A quartet in the second act, "Oh! is she not a lovely creature," also deserves honourable mention as a *chef d'œuvre*, in a small way, of genial and graceful treatment applied to a melodious and ingeniously developed subject. The orchestration of "Esmeralda" impressed me as alternating between dainty intricacy and cloying sensuousness. Like the majority of young composers, Mr. Thomas has put too many plums—not to speak of other and costlier ingredients galore—into his pudding. This pardonable extravagance on his part bears convincing testimony to the large calibre of his talent and considerable extent of his imaginative and constructive resources. It takes a wealthy man to be lavish of superfluities; and it is a shrewd French proverb that says, "*abondance de biens ne nuit pas.*" If the instrumentation of "Esmeralda" is at times a thought too rich and gaudy to please the classic taste, it is always —to its minutest detail—scientifically correct, and put together with masterly skill. Mr. Thomas does not disdain the use of the *Leitmotiv*; but he wields this musical "flapper" with light-handed

discretion, studiously forbearing to bang it about the ears of his audience. In short, there is a deal of real enjoyment, subtle as well as solid, to be derived from attending a performance of "Esmeralda," as that opera is given by Carl Rosa's company.

To the libretto more than one cogent objection may be raised, chief amongst which is the cold-blooded *outrecuidance* with which it stultifies the artistic purpose of Victor Hugo's touching story, by converting its deeply tragical *dénouement* into the most commonplace of conclusions. That Esmeralda and Phœbus should get married at the close of the fourth act, and live happily for ever after, is all very well from the school-girl novel-reading point of view; but, as a new ending to "Nôtre Dame de Paris," it appears to me no less revolting than impertinent. Mr. Marzials' verses, here and there, are ungrammatical and obscured, as far as the reader's ready apprehension of their meaning is concerned, by confusion of metaphor; but this is a minor offence. To write a libretto satisfactory at once to a cultivated literary taste and to the trained musical ear, is an undertaking of such extraordinary difficulty that, to the best of my knowledge, it has never yet—in the English language, at least—been achieved. An ordinary rhymester, endowed with a strong sense of rhythm, is more likely to turn out a libretto of decent quality than is a true poet. Such a libretto, on the whole, is the "book" of "Esmeralda." Not infrequently (as, for instance, in the duet between Esmeralda and Phœbus, "If I be like a flower," and in Quasimodo's fine solo at the commencement of the fourth act), Mr. Marzials' verses attain a high standard of merit, and exhibit genuine poetical feeling; and his words, for the most part, fit Mr. Thomas's music very accurately. But he might have written them down to the Bunn level and been held guiltless, had he forborne meddling with the fateful *dénouement* of Hugo's master-work. Esmeralda, about to be wedded to her frivolous and heartless seducer, is the substitution of a paltry platitude for a heartrending catastrophe. For such a feat of legerdemain Mr. Marzials must not expect civilized mankind to feel grateful.

The title *rôle* of "Emeralda" is not one of Miss Burns' happiest creations, probably owing to circumstances which have temporarily impaired this gifted artist's efficiency, both as actress

and singer. Mr McGuckin's impersonation of Phœbus could scarcely be improved upon. His symmetrical figure and gallant bearing are well suited to the part of a dashing young soldier with sentimental proclivities; and he sings the music allotted to him, from first to last, tunefully and expressively. The Quasimodo of Mr. Crotty cannot be too warmly praised. Vocally and dramatically alike, it is a display of unsurpassable artistic excellence. To hear him sing "What would I do for my Queen?" is as complete a pleasure as a music-lover can well experience. Mr. Ludwig is picturesque and impressive as Claude Frollo, Miss Perry correct and uninteresting as Fleur de Lis, Mr. Davies painstaking and efficient in the singularly unsympathetic part of Gringoire. The chorus singing may, without the least exaggeration, be described as irreproachable; nor can less be said with justice of the orchestra's achievements under Mr. Randegger's brilliant and highly intellectual leadership. Of the scenery it is enough to say that the first "set" in the Cour des Miracles is a *chef d'œuvre* of its kind, and that the other scenes are not unworthy of it.

"Colomba," the second novelty of Mr. Rosa's brief season, is not only a very beautiful musical work, but, in some respects, the most important and satisfactory opera ever yet given to the world by an English composer. The offspring of eminent talent and the highest sort of artistic culture, it is singularly free from the hackneyed methods, conventional forms and foregone conclusions that at once vulgarize and render tiresome those English operas which have hitherto achieved popularity in this country, and maintained their position on the repertoires of operatic *impressarii* for the last quarter of a century. "Colomba," although its instrumental details are worked out with extraordinary minuteness and ingenuity, conveys the impression of having been written *tout d'un jet*. It is a continuous musical narrative, broken up into four chapters, or acts, in deference to scenic requirements and the conveniences of performers and audience alike; but it suffers no artistic solution of continuity. All its parts belong to one another quite naturally—they are not bound together by that Wagnerian contrivance, a "chain of endless melody," but by congenital affinities. Mr. Mackenzie's melodies

are not always original ; but it is obvious to any musician that all his borrowing has been done unconsciously. They are, at any rate, goodly tunes ; and what is not absolutely new in them he has for the most part beautified with subtle grace. For example, the opening four-bar phrase of the *vocero* in the first act is a reminiscence of Donizetti almost amounting to a reproduction ; but deftly retouched by Mr. Mackenzie, the air that is essentially commonplace in "Lucia" becomes tenderly refined in "Colomba." This annexation, as well as others less conspicuous, is manifestly an unwitting one—and Donizetti has certainly no reason to complain of it. The *vocero* is a delightful and highly characteristic song. That, rather than uncomely originality, is its true function, for the fulfilment of which by any lyric we cannot be too grateful.

The space placed at my disposal this month by the Editor of THE THEATRE, will not admit more than a cursory and superficial notice of the leading features presented by the libretto and its setting. I have no room for even a skeletonian digest of the story. Mr. Hueffer's "book" would have done great credit to an able English writer of verse, and, being the work of a foreigner, is little short of a marvel. But for the learned author's exaggerated view of its qualities, set forth in a preface too obviously inspired by excessive self-appreciation, I for one should have had no fault to find with this very clever and painstaking *recueil* of rhymes and blank-verses. But, like the player-queen in "Hamlet," Mr. Hueffer "doth protest too much." In explaining the "purpose" of his libretto, he designates its contents as "poetry," and refers with severe scorn to "Della Cruscan mannerisms"—perpetrated by foregoing librettists—with which, however, his own text is profusely disfigured. Only those who are indisputably guiltless of any particular class of offence should venture to denounce and reprehend that offence in others. Barbarisms and false concords in literary English, however excusable in an intelligent alien, are peculiarly objectionable in a professed reformer of abuses, who loftily denies "the necessity or desirableness (!) of such absurdities," and straightway proceeds to commit them with astonishing lavishness. With Mr. Hueffer's remodelling of Merimée's fascinating story every one capable of appreciating the exigencies of the operatic stage has reason to be thoroughly

content. And the "book" of "Colomba" is, take it for all in all, an exceptionally good "book"—but no freer from certain defects that appear to be intrinsic to English libretti than the majority of its predecessors.

Amongst the more universally attractive of Mr. Mackenzie's numbers, all of which are interesting, must be reckoned the bright chorus that opens act i., the *vocero* mentioned in a previous paragraph, the sentimental duet with which Orso and Lydia are introduced to the audience, a ballad assigned to Chilina, "So he thought of his love," which is inexpressibly touching, the "Corsican Love-song" (act iii.), and the duets of reproach and reconciliation in the fourth act. Besides these gems of the first water, sparkling musical trinkets in the way of characteristic dances, marches, and choruses, profusely embellish "Colomba," and afford delightful relief to its prevalent mournfulness of tone. It is only when endeavouring to impart musical significance to commonplace conversation that Mr. Mackenzie is in the least disappointing; and even then he is not offensive, as Wagner only too often was in similar attempts. "Colombas'" uniform cleverness and wealth of subtle devices in the management of orchestral parts, exercise a strain upon the musical listener's attention that sometimes surpasses pleasurable limits; but for this its superabundant merits, not its shortcomings, are accountable. In short, it is a potent work, replete with promise of noble successors, a source at once of legitimate pride and hopeful anticipation to Mr. Mackenzie's fellow-countrymen.

Seldom within my experience has the task of criticism been made so agreeable for me as by the rendering of this remarkable opera at Drury Lane. In the title *rôle* Madame Valleria sang to perfection, and made a splendid display of the dramatic intelligence and power in which she is unsurpassed by any living prima donna. Her delivery of the *vendetta-motiv*, or *vocero*, was simply a *chef d'œuvre* of voice-production. The part of Lydia, for which Mr. Mackenzie has written some arduous declamatory music, was efficiently sustained by Mdlle. Baldi, whose vocalization and intonation are alike excellent. Miss Perry, as Chilina, to whom the two lyrical gems of the opera are confided, earned a vehement encore by her unaffected singing of the sad and significant ballad, "So he thought

of his love," and rendered good service in several concerted pieces. Mr. McGuckin's impersonation of the chivalrous young chief of the Della Rebbia clan left absolutely nothing to be desired. This industrious and clever young artist makes steady and continuous progress in the development of his great natural gifts, and this year exhibits, as Captain Orso, an improvement that, to speak frankly, ranks him second to none amongst cotemporary operatic tenors. As the plausible and treacherous Barracini, Mr. Ludwig acted and sang admirably, It is perhaps not unnatural that a blood-thirsty bandit should sing out of tune ; if so, the representative of Savelii may be credited with having given a highly characteristic vocal interpretation of his part. That the Governor of Corsica, too, was not always in the middle of the note may be reasonably ascribed to the heavy responsibilities of his official position. All else was faultless—the chorus-singing, the orchestral accompaniments, and the unusually pretty dancing. In a word, the production of "Colomba" has been a musical "event" of the highest importance, upon the unqualified success of which everybody who has had a hand in it, from the composer down to the humblest "super," may be justly and cordially felicitated.

Amongst the lyrical novelties of the past month that are deserving of notice are two drawing-room songs of considerable merit, "Let it be soon" (Ricordi) and "Farewell" (Novello, Ewer & Co.). The former is by Signor Paolo Tosti, who has set some passionate love-verses by Mr. Clement Scott to appropriate music in his own clever and eminently *ad captandum* manner ; the latter—in which Mr. Grimshaw has proved himself capable of arraying silly words in garments of thoughtful and significant music—is admirably suited to the concert-room, where it ought to make a hit. By the way, the words in question are Lord Byron's. It seems scarcely credible that one of the greatest poets of any age or country should have written such senseless stuff as the following :

Oh ! more than tears of blood can tell
When wrung from guilt's expiring eye,
Are in that word—Farewell !

or,

My soul nor deigns nor dares complain,
Though grief and passion these rebel.

There is scarcely anything in the "Bohemian Girl" libretto itself that can outvie these lines in lack of meaning and constructive incorrect-

ness. If Byron really composed them, he must have done so when reduced to temporary imbecility by that depressing malady—the result of excessive conviviality—known in Germany as "cat-grief," and in France as "a pain in the hair." To the mezzo-soprano songstress of the salon I can confidently recommend "Golden Rest," a pretty and tender lullaby, the musical setting of which is also by Mr. Grimshaw. This soothingly crooning little *Schlummerlied* is published by Messrs. Novello, Ewer & Co.

A word or two of cordial praise is honestly due to the music of "A Private Wire," the new *lever de rideau* at the Savoy. It is tuneful throughout, and most refreshingly unconventional, a quality which implies, and quite correctly so in this case, a certain degree of originality. I heartily congratulate Mr. Percy Reeve upon the production of so clever and charming a composition, instrumentated with such cheerful grace and delicate contrivance. More than one cotemporary German writer for the lyric stage might, with advantage to the public, emulate the melodiousness of Mr. Reeve's *berçeuse* and the ripe constructive ability characterizing his delightful quintet in "A Private Wire."

WILLIAM BEATTY-KINGSTON.

Our Play-Box.

"THE RECTOR."

A New and Original Play in Four Acts, by A. W. PINERO. Produced at the Court Theatre, on Saturday, March 24, 1883.

The Rev. Humphrey Sharland	MR. JOHN CLAYTON.	Mr. Gilks	MR. G. TRENT.
Dr. Oliver Fulljames...	MR. H. KEMBLE.	Mr. Voss	MR. WILLES.
Captain Jesmond Ryle	MR. A. ELWOOD.	Saul Mash	MR. PHILIP DAY.
Connor Hennessy ...	MR. ARTHUR CECIL.	Tong	MR. MAURICE.
Mr. Hockaday	MR. MACKINTOSH.	Hope Hennessy	MISS MARION TERRY.
Octavius	MASTER PHILLIPS.	Sally Brotherhood ...	MISS KATE RORKE.

IT is of little use to waste words over a play that so signally failed to attract public sympathy as this. Not a year passes but at least a dozen carefully considered, well-written, conscientiously planned dramatic works miss their mark altogether, and are sent, without ceremony, into a shadow-land of theatrical ghosts. All that can be said is, that it is a pity. But for all that, it cannot

be helped. Mr. Pinero must suffer as Mr. Albery, Mr. Merivale, Mr. Gilbert, Mr. Wills, and countless authors have suffered before him. When a play, in many respects extremely clever, but as a whole unsympathetic to an audience, meets with an adverse fate, all kinds of reasons are assigned for the failure except the right one. The critics are prejudiced, or the public is composed of fools. The stage is supposed to be degraded, or it is said that literature is tabooed. Nothing of the kind. The play has merely met with one of those lamentable accidents that attend this form of composition. Only the ignorant and the impudent would consider Mr. Pinero one atom less talented because "The Rector" failed to please. Yet this is the way of the world. A man writes a trashy melodrama, as vulgar as it is tricky, and he is lauded to the skies as a second Shakespeare. It has succeeded, and that is enough. Another writes an "Oriana," a "White Pilgrim," a "Juana," or a "Vanderdecken," and straightway he is kicked—but only by the asses of the fold. We have no audiences to-day who are willing to pay ten shillings for a stall in order to sit out that which is generally uninteresting for occasional moments of cleverness. Theatres are dear, and practical folk like their money's worth. If seats were cheaper, there would be more audiences for plays like "The Rector."

In this case, no doubt, Mr. Pinero flew in the face of dramatic precedent, and was at infinite pains to show that it was a mistake to let your audience into the inner secret of your plot. He determined to fog the spectator in order to obtain a momentary surprise. Tradition here was proved to be right and Mr. Pinero wrong, and the lesson, though a disheartening one, may not be without its value. In "The Rector," Mr. Pinero professed to tell the story of four friends; in reality he did nothing of the kind. He told the story of an honest clergyman, who is led to cast suspicion on the fame of his tender and affectionate wife, because he has credited a wild story trumped up by a friend—who turns out to be a madman! The audience all through is vexed to think that an obviously sweet woman is disreputable, and vents its vexation on the author when he is detected in laying a snare for them. There was some admirable writing in the play, and some excellent acting. I can recall nothing better from Mr. John Clayton, the manly and affectionate Rector; from Miss Marion Terry, the gentle and sympathetic wife; from Mr. Arthur

Cecil, a well-bred old Irish gentleman; or from Mr. Philip Day and Miss Rorke, a delightful pair of rustic lovers. Mr. Mackintosh was good also, but may be recommended to "moderate the rancour of his tongue." Better acting of its kind could not be seen, but good acting cannot give life or coherence to a play that has a hitch in it. This was proved at this theatre also in "Comrades," as well-acted a play as was to be found at the time in all London.

"LURETTE."

A new Comic Opera in Three Acts, adapted from the French by FRANK DESPREZ and ALFRED MURRAY; Music by JACQUES OFFENBACH. The Lyrics by HENRY S. LEIGH.

Le Duc de Marly ...	MR. H. BRACY.	Cardigan	MISS FANNY MOORE.
Cornichon	MR. T. P. HAYNES.	De Lehoncourt ...	MISS JESSIE BARRINGTON.
Sergeant Belhomme ...	MR. T. G. WARREN.		
Malicorne	M. MARIUS.	Friquette	MISS HUGHES.
Lurette	MISS FLORENCE ST. JOHN.	Toinette	MISS BELLINGHAM.
		Nicole	MISS VERINI.
Marceline	MISS LOTTIE VENNE.	Rose	MISS SHARPE.
La Chanoinesse ...	MISS FANNY COLEMAN.	Clorinde	MISS ETHEL VERINI.
La Boiserie	MISS BEATRICE ST. MAUR.		

IN the production of Offenbach's "Lurette," at the Avenue Theatre by Messrs. Gunn and Hollingshead, the public have not been slow to recognize a laudable effort in the direction of emancipating Anglicized French Comic Opera from some of the traditional embarassments by which, for the most part, it has hitherto been beset in this country—such as feeble, clumsy, and frequently ungrammatical libretti, the employment of incompetent actors and singers for minor parts, a regrettable lack of finish in the execution of orchestral accompaniments, and, last but not least, a disagreeable flavour of vulgarity running through the whole performance. From all these defects and unpleasantnesses the Avenue "Lurette" is free. The "book" is by Mr. H. S. Leigh, the bard of Cockayne, who could not write bad verses if he tried, and contains several lyrics far above the operetta average, most dexterously fitted to the rhythms and accents of the music. Every part, without exception, is efficiently filled. The orchestra is unusually "full," nicely balanced throughout, and conducted with great taste. Barring a little commonplace "gag," presumably introduced into the part of Cornichon for the delectation of the gallery, there is nothing in the least vulgar throughout the piece, either in dialogue or action, although it never for a moment lapses into dulness. Of the scenery—that of the first and third acts is really lovely—chorus-

singing, dresses and appointments in general, it may fairly be said that they are as good as they can be.

The plot of "Lurette," at first sight, appears simpler than it is. It may be told in a few words. A rackety young Duke marries a washerwoman of surpassing beauty, quits her—professedly for ever—half an hour after the wedding ceremony towards the close of the second act, and returns to her *pour le bon motif*, with the avowed intention of thenceforth fulfilling his marital obligations, shortly before the final fall of the curtain. That is the whole story. It is not until reflection has superseded amusement that one begins to wonder why the Duke marries at all, if resolved to abandon his wife so prematurely—why, if he must marry, he should espouse an "entire stranger" in the soapsud interest, and why, having done both these unreasonable things, he should finally come back to the forsaken one and passionately plead for "restitution of conjugal rights." Questions of this sort ought to find their answers in the libretto; but, in the case of "Lurette," they do not. Nor is the narrative, as set forth in the spoken dialogue, as transparent as it might be. It lacks limpidity. One ought not perhaps to be too *exigeant* about "motives of action" in an Offenbachian operetta, as long as it ends comfortably for all parties, and the heroine is only made just unhappy enough to give her opportunities for singing one or two pathetic or even sentimental songs, in pleasing contrast to the otherwise rollicking character of her vocal utterances.

Miss Florence St. John, the *prima donna assolutissima* of operetta on the English stage, sings and acts the title *rôle* with all the energy, grace, and intelligence which invariably characterize that highly-gifted young lady's impersonations. Although, as far as her voice is concerned, she is always at high pressure, making the most of her physical *moyens* and but rarely condescending to the relaxation of a *mezza-voce* production, it is a true musical refreshment to listen to her singing by reason of its pure intonation and sound artistic method. Her proper designation in the piece being "La Belle Lurette," it is needless to say that she thoroughly "looks the part." As Marceline, the "boss" of the washing establishment to which Lurette belongs, Miss Lottie Venne is deliciously pert and uniformly charming. In her second dress, she presents a life-size realization of the ideal Dresden shepherdess, *mignonne*, fragile and tenderly tinted, with

a pretty little strut and fantastic way of preening herself that are positively irresistible. M. Marius, who has partially recovered his voice, plays the part of Malicorne—the Duke's knavish confidential valet—with clever quaintness and laughter-moving frivolity. In itself the *rôle* is not a particularly brilliant one ; but M. Marius contrives to make it exceedingly funny throughout. Mr. Bracy's Duke deserves unqualified praise. His handsome person is shown off to great advantage by elegant costumes of the Louis XV. period, the music assigned to him suits his voice admirably, and he plays the *debonnair*, whimsical young Grand Seigneur very brightly and gaily. The minor parts, as has already been pointed out, are all satisfactorily sustained by their respective representatives.

From beginning to end the music of "Lurette" is pretty and taking, in Jacques Offenbach's latest and best manner. Its melodies are possibly not remarkable for originality—indeed, one or two of them are obviously "borrowed" from Johann Strauss *avec intention*—but they are well put together, and easy, as well as pleasant, to remember. If the orchestral accompaniments are a thought slenderly constructed, it must be at least admitted that their instrumentation is delightful. One of the numbers (Couplets : "In London town"), which obtains a double encore every evening, is simply a new version of "Die schoene blaue Donau ;" and this is not the only familiar Austrian tune utilized by the composer, for a homely old Styrian Laendler crops up in one of Lurette's subsequent *soli*. The rondo and ensemble (act ii.), "Colette one day slipt out," sparkles with gleefulness of a very contagious kind, such as is well described by the French word *entrainant*. A romance, sung by Lurette upon discovering that her newly wedded husband has voluntarily forsaken her, is the gem, musically speaking, of the whole work, and is unexceptionably rendered by Miss St. John. It is called, "Would I could die," and is well qualified to achieve social success as a drawing-room song.

Leaving "Lurette's" intrinsic merits as a composition out of the question, the excellence of its "setting," mounting, and performance throughout should, and doubtless will, ensure it a good "run," lasting at least until the end of the coming London season. It is essentially one of those recreative pieces, frankly devoid of all pretensions to importance or gravity, and blithe-

somely unintellectual, that everybody ought to, and, as a rule, does go to see.

"CYMBIA; OR, THE MAGIC THIMBLE."

An Original Comic Opera, in Three Acts, by Florian Pascal and Harry Paulton. Produced at the Strand Theatre, on Monday, March 26, 1883.

King Arthur	Mr. Harry Paulton.	Cymbia	Mdlle. Camille d'Arville.
Burbos	Mr. F. Gaillard.	Princess Menaa ...	Miss Louise Vesalius.
Bleobber	Mr. W. G. Bedford.	Princess Rhaadar ...	Miss Vere Carew.
Redaine	Mr. C. A. White.	Princess Penarra ...	Miss Grace Balmaine.
Carrow	Mr. Henry Walsham.	Gurtha	Miss Avondale.
Cadwallader-ap-Cadwallader	Mr. G. Weathersby.	Æthel	Miss Lancaster.
Grippinghame	Mr. J. Francis.	Beda	Miss La Feuillade.
Goodyer	Mr. A. Sims.	Minna	Miss L'Estrange.

The production of "Cymbia; or, the Magic Thimble," at the Strand Theatre, is a legitimate subject of congratulation to everybody concerned in that achievement—to the management, for its judicious casting and splendid mounting of the piece, not forgetting the credit due to it for encouraging native talent; to the composer, for enriching the *répertoire* of English comic opera with an item of real musical beauty and value; to the performers of all classes, for their excellent renderings of the parts assigned to them; and, lastly, to the music-loving public, for which this delightful entertainment cannot fail to prove a *bonne bouche* of no ordinary sweetness. "Cymbia" is a charming work throughout. From first to last its musical interest never flags. It does not contain one positively ugly number, and only one or two that are commonplace and *banales*. Its melodies are pleasing, and for the most part novel; brightness of conception and intelligence in construction characterize the concerted pieces; and the orchestration, always workmanlike, is not infrequently masterly to boot. Mr. Florian Pascal—since it pleases the youthful author of "Cymbia" to be publicly known by that foreign-flavoured pseudonym, instead of by his own essentially British patronymic—has proved himself by this, his first composition of any magnitude, a writer of no ordinary capacity for voice and orchestra alike.

In the Land of Operetta and Burlesque (christened "Little Britain" for the nonce by the librettist of "Cymbia") reigns King Arthur, an impecunious monarch, who counts upon his sons to extricate him from his difficulties by contracting lucrative matrimonial alliances. One of the Princes, however, Carrow by name, is a misogynist with a turn for the fine arts, who will not

hear of love, much less marriage, although there is an execution in the Royal Castle at the time the action of the play commences. Carrow's three brothers—respectively types of conceit, self-sufficiency, and ineptitude—have fallen into their father's views, and are awaiting an equal number of wealthy brides in the banqueting hall, where harpists, obviously of the Welsh persuasion, greet the rising of the curtain by part-songs, vociferated in the true Eisteddfodd manner. Cymbia—a shepherdess, to whom a defunct grandmother, formerly of high standing in the necromantic profession, has bequeathed a thimble, gifted with the power of enabling its possessor to realize his or her every wish—now appears on the scene, and instantaneously becomes enamoured of Carrow, who rejects her frank advances, although, by the thimble's magical agency, she endows him with the artistic talent he has hitherto lacked and vainly yearned to acquire. King Arthur, however, takes a fancy to her, and consults her with respect to the assortment of his sons and daughters-in-law, all of whom she contrives to offend. They insist upon her expulsion from Court, and in the scuffle that ensues she loses her talisman, which passes into the custody of Carrow. The remainder of the plot—space fails us to attempt the unravelling of its successive intricacies—is made up of the more or less surprising incidents brought about by the further changing of hands suffered by Cymbia's thimble, utilized alternately as an instrument of revenge and beneficence, of mischief and reconciliation. Finally, it makes everybody happy, the undeserving as well as the meritorious; thus, from an Opéra Comique point of view, fulfilling its supernatural functions with exemplary completeness.

In the handsome and gifted young lady who sustains the title *rôle* of "Cymbia," we unhesitatingly recognize a star of the first magnitude, fully entitled to rank on equal terms with such luminaries of the operetta firmament as Miss St. John and Miss Cameron. Endowed by Nature with a voice of great compass and singularly sweet quality, Mdlle. Camille d'Arville has studied the art of singing to some purpose. As a matter of fact—especially in regard to her method of tone-production—she is an accomplished and delightful vocalist. Her intonation is absolutely faultless. She acts, too, as she sings, with excellent taste and discretion, never condescending to any of those *ad captandum* tricks by which too many "leading ladies" in English comic opera distress the more

cultivated element of their audiences. Mdlle. d'Arville's part is what is technically called a heavy one, making no inconsiderable call upon her physical resources, which, however, are as entirely at her command at the close of the piece as at its commencement. Her singing of a very charming ballad ("No more, no more," act ii.) would in itself suffice to signalize her as one of the most sympathetic songstresses of the day; but it is in no essential respect worthier of unqualified praise than are her renderings of the other numbers assigned to her. It should be mentioned that the song in question is fitted with an extremely clever and effective accompaniment of violoncello *obligato*.

Mr. Harry Paulton, as King Arthur, is an inimitable exponent of his own saturnine waggeries, with which his share of the dialogue is abundantly enlivened. He sings his songs as drily as he speaks his words, which is saying a good deal; and even his comic dancing is not without a touch of bear-like gravity. His patter-song "I'm music'ly mad," although we believe it nightly earns him a triple recall from audiences convulsed with laughter, is the weakest number, with respect alike to music and text, in the whole work. Extravagance of diction and even confusion of ideas are excusable—nay desirable, as enhancing the sheer fun of the thing—in the lyrical utterances of a comic lunatic. But they should not be permitted to overstep the limits of intelligibility and grammar. King Arthur when, after setting forth that, to him, a bar is the same as a shake or a clef, he goes on to say that "all three might either be, though each to t'other be add," lays an unnecessary strain upon the divining powers of his hearers, who, were they dipus to a man, could never hope to guess his meaning.

The pleasant and well-delivered light tenor voice of Mr. Henry Walsham is heard to advantage in the lyric part of Carrow, which teems with pretty music, conveniently written for the singer; and the subordinate *rôles* of the three princely couples leave little to be desired. M. Gaillard, as Burbos, King Arthur's "eldest hope," is bright, tuneful and animated, singing a martial air "Our Native Hills," with infinite spirit and *verve*. The other two Princes, Bleobber and Redaine (Messrs. Bedford and White) have not much to do, but contribute satisfactorily to the concerted music. So do the three Princesses, Menaa, Rhaadar, and Penarra (Misses Vesalius, Carew and Balmaine), the first-named of whom is en-

trusted with an agreeable song, "For better, for worse." Mr. Francis, as Grippinghame, an Early English sheriff's officer, must be mirthfully felicitated upon the quaint lugubriousness of his "make-up." The chorists of both sexes sing well in time and tune, which is all that can be asked, and, as a rule, more than is to be expected of them. Scenery, dresses, appointments are all first-class of their kind.

"ASCOT."

A New and Original Farcical Comedy, in Two Acts, by PERCY FENDALL. Produced for the first time in London on Thursday, March 29, 1883, at the Folies-Dramatiques (Novelty) Theatre. Originally produced at the Theatre Royal, Oldham, on October 13, 1879.

Geoffrey Plummer ...	MR. GILBERT FARQUHAR.	Mrs. Plummer	MISS ELLEN VICARY.
Tom Warden	MR. WALTER BARTON.	Mrs. Warden	MISS DOT ROBINS.
Mr. Spotter	MR. R. C. MARTIN.	Miss Kate Grosvenor...	MISS MAGGIE ARCHER.
Raggles	MR. DESMOND.	Mrs. Manley	MISS FLORENCE MARRYAT.

MERELY for the sake of reference is this play alluded to in these columns. It was designed for the sake of advertising the incompetence of some amateurs, who conceived they were doing the stage service by appearing upon it, and the comedy so-called was found to be in the worst possible taste. It is bad enough to test the patience of the public by the egregious vanity of people who have no claim to be considered sufficiently talented to appear in an ordinary amateur troupe, but it is worse when the play selected goes out of its way to cast a slur upon the social condition of the dramatic profession at large. The motto that "it is an ill bird that fouls its own nest," may be commended to those who patronize the stage by appearing upon it, and who go out of their way mischievously to destroy the fabric that has been built up with so much care and industry.

"BONDAGE."

A New Play in Four Acts, adapted from the French of PIERRE D'ALRY. Produced at the Opera Comique Theatre, on Saturday, March 31, 1883.

Robert L'Estrange ...	MR. CHARLES KELLY.	Servant	MR. ROBERTSON.
Sir Gilbert Vincent ...	MR GEORGE ALEXANDER.	Mrs. L'Estrange ...	MISS NELLY BROMLEY.
Bernard Fitzgerald ...	MR. JOHN BENN.	Hon. Mrs. Schneider	MISS AGNES THOMAS.
Mr. Schneider	MR. WM. FARREN, JUN.	Alice L'Estrange ...	MISS MABEL HARDINGE.
Mirton	MR. R. STOCKTON.	Helen Maxwell	MISS HILDA HILTON.

THE rapid and complete failure of this adaptation is a faint indication of the fact that the public are at last beginning to recognize that with them lies the chief power of suppressing that which is unwholesome or unnecessary on the stage. When, at the conclusion of the first performance of "Bondage," a gentleman

stepped in front of the curtain and inquired if the play was a success, he was greeted with determined cries of "No, no." This, too, in a house where the frequenters of the pit—those honest and sturdy supporters of the drama—are relegated to the upper regions of the theatre, was a note of resolution and strength that has long been wanting on the part of the public. If playgoers were allowed the free exercise of their will, they would assemble on the first nights and soundly hiss off the stage all unworthy works and all incapable aspirants to theatrical success. In "Bondage," an obscure French drama, by one Pierre d'Alry, was temporarily brought to light. Its story was not interesting, the play was not too skilfully constructed, and it was most indifferently acted. Miss Hilda Hilton, suffering, it was said, from an affection of the throat, failed to elicit the slightest sympathy for the character of the heroine, and her acting seemed to be composed almost entirely of mechanical movements, enlivened by painfully spasmodical jerks. Mr. Charles Kelly did not rouse himself for a single instant from a lethargy which seemed to have complete possession of him. Mr. George Alexander exhibited some little passion, and a character sketch of considerable finish came from Mr. William Farren, jun. Miss N. Bromley struggled bravely with an unsatisfactory part, and Miss Agnes Thomas proved herself a very agreeable exponent of comedy.

"VICE-VERSÂ: A LESSON TO FATHERS."

A Dramatic Sketch, in Three Tableaux, founded by Edward Rose, on the story of the same name by F. Anstey. Produced at the Gaiety Theatre on Monday afternoon, April 9, 1883.

Mr. Bultitude's Body	Mr. C. H. Hawtrey.	Tipping	Mr. E. Hamilton Bell.
Dick's Body	Mr. Edward Rose.	Chawner	Mr. T. Cannam.
Dr. Grimstone	Mr. W. F. Hawtrey.	Dulcie	Miss Laura Linden.
Mr. Shellack	Mr. Louis Armstrong.	Eliza	Miss Rose Roberts.
Clegg	Mr. Frank Wood.		

This adaptation of Mr. F. Anstey's very popular story was cleverly done by Mr. Edward Rose, but it did not wholly succeed as a play. It is one thing to dream away an hour or so over a whimsical story cleverly told, but it is quite another to witness an attempt to embody characters which can be better and more easily pictured in the imagination of every reader than delineated on the stage. The first portion of such a dramatic work as "Vice-Versâ" is, perhaps, well enough for a good-tempered audience. But one soon wearies of such work. It amuses at first, but soon grows flat and dull, like a bottle of champagne which has remained uncorked too long.

"LADY CLARE."

A New Drama of Modern Society, in Five Acts, by ROBERT BUCHANAN. Produced at the Globe Theatre on Wednesday, April 11, 1883.

The Countess of Broadmeads	MISS CARLOTTA LECLERCQ.	Melissa Smale	MRS. DIGBY WILLOUGHBY.
Lady Clare Brookfield	MISS ADA CAVENDISH.	Count Legrange	MR. E. HAMILTON BELL.
Hon. Cecil Brookfield	MISS HARRIET JAY.	Major O'Connor... ...	MR. LAWRENCE GREY.
Lord Ambermere ...	MR. PHILIP BECK.	Woosnam	MR. L. CANNAM.
John Middleton	MR. ALFRED BUCKLAW.	Mrs. Forster	MISS CLIFTON DELMAR.
Mary Middleton ...	MISS LYDIA COWELL.	Montgomery	MR. NORTON.
Mr. Gould Smale ...	MR. HORACE WIGAN.	Grimes	MR. H. JONES.

"LADY CLARE" contains the germs of a charming and dramatic story, but Mr. Robert Buchanan has displayed very little constructive power in his latest work, and he has contrived to spoil what might, under abler hands, have been made into a good drama. The play does not even possess that literary finish which might have been expected from its author. The dialogue is neither forcible nor polished. Each act recalls scenes from other plays, and it must be admitted that the drama is a crude, unsatisfactory work. The story is this: The first of the five acts into which the play is divided takes place at the home of Lady Clare Brookfield. Lady Clare is in love with Lord Ambermere, and her affection is returned. She is also loved by a wealthy manufacturer, John Middleton, who asks her to be his wife. She refuses his suit, but on hearing that Lord Ambermere is ruined, and that, in order to retrieve his fortunes, he is about to marry a rich American girl, and also to recoup her own shattered estate, Lady Clare agrees to marry Mr. Middleton. In the second act we hear that the heroine is married, but still, not loving her husband, she resolves to fly from him. Middleton will not allow her to thus desert him, and he and his wife determine to live together husband and wife in name only. The third act takes place at Dieppe. Lord Ambermere has followed Lady Clare and her husband, and, through an opportunity provided by his wife, who is jealous of his old love, he makes an avowal of his passion for his proud cousin. He is interrupted by the arrival of Middleton, and the two men quarrel, with the result of a duel being arranged. The fourth act shows in its first scene how Lady Clare discovers that her husband is going to fight Lord Ambermere. The second scene of this act takes place in a forest glade. The two men arrive to fight, and just as they fire—the duel being with pistols—Lady Clare rushes on and falls apparently lifeless. The last act depicts the recovery of Lady Clare, who has only been shot in the shoulder by the bullet intended for her husband. At last she has learnt to love her husband, and to recognize the value of his noble nature. She is

debating in her mind as to the expediency of telling him that she loves him, when the intrepid, shameless Lord Ambermere enters and again avows his passion. He is vain enough to think that in her endeavour to stop the duel Lady Clare had been concerned in his safety instead of that of her husband. But for once he is mistaken, and the lady turns upon him and tells him that she loves her husband. Middleton has heard her repulse the scoundrel, and he orders Lord Ambermere off the premises, husband and wife being at last united. The burden of the acting falls upon Miss Ada Cavendish, who plays with much art and true passion, although the character of Lady Clare is unworthy of the actress. Mr. Alfred Bucklaw is too inexperienced and not sufficiently interesting for the part of Middleton, and Mr. Philip Beck is somewhat stagey as Lord Ambermere. Miss Harriett Jay gives a fresh, bright, and unconventional rendering of a boy, and Miss Lydia Cowell is charming in a small *rôle*. Mr. Horace Wigan appears as a wealthy American, and distinguishes himself by a hideous and uncharacteristic disguise. The entire "new drama" is an exact paraphrase of a story by Georges Ohnet, called "Le Maitre de Forges," scene for scene and situation for situation.

"RACHEL."

A New Drama in a Prologue and Three Acts, by Sydney Grundy. Produced at the Olympic Theatre on Saturday, April 14, 1883.

Characters in the Prologue—

Sir Phillip Grant	Mr. W. H. Vernon.	1st Policeman	Mr. H. Darvell.
Captain Craven	Mr. Hermann Vezin.	2nd Policeman	Mr. H. Knight.
Sergeant Matthews ...	Mr. W. E. Blatchley.	Margaret Waters ...	Mrs. Leigh Murray.
Jack Adams...	Mr. F. Staunton.	Rachel	Miss Geneviève Ward.

Characters in the Drama—

Sir Philip Grant	Mr. W. H. Vernon.	Mr. Shorrocks	Mr. J. W. Piggott.
Captain Craven	Mr. Hermann Vezin.	Mason	Mr. Edwards.
Harold Lee	Mr. T. C. Bindloss.	Gladys Grant	Miss Lucy Buckstone.
Superintendent Matthews...	Mr. W. E. Blatchley.	Mrs. Athelstan	Miss Genevieve Ward.

The new drama, by Mr. Sidney Grundy, entitled "Rachel," now being performed at the Olympic Theatre, is a play which seems to elude criticism, so vague and indistinct is the plot upon which the story is based. Most of the characters are drawn with a firm, decisive hand, but they severally fail in fulfilling the hopes they arouse. The prologue is neither wanting in interest nor dramatic power, but, while endeavouring to acquaint us with the facts which form the basis of the subsequent scenes, it only succeeds in mystifying us completely. We are plunged into a life of divided natures and interests, without being aware of the relative positions which the various characters occupy one towards the other. The part of Rachel affords Miss Geneviève Ward ample scope for portraying the merciless revenge which she can depict with so much ability. Apart from the play, the character

rivets our attention by the stern reality with which it is invested. The determined, unflinching hatred against the man who has so deeply injured her is displayed with marvellous power and realism ; but Miss Ward fails to arrest our sympathies when the life of the woman changes through the great and absorbing love she bears for her child. The gentler emotions lose their reality; our interest in Rachel ceases to exist when her better and truer nature asserts itself, because the pathos merges into artificiality; the love, however much expressed by endearing words and gestures, cannot be said to be portrayed with the same amount of power which influenced the woman's nature when revenge was the sole object of her life. Mr. Vernon invests the character of Sir Philip Grant with an amount of earnestness which cannot fail to arouse our sympathy, in however small a degree. A man's love for a woman, already past her girlhood, might be easily treated in a way to arouse both incredulity and indifference on the subject. But in the present instance the love appears so real, so true, that the affection of the boy and girl (respectively played by Miss Buckstone and Mr. Bindloss) fades into comparative insignificance before the devotion of a man who has known and lived in a world of many and varied experiences. As a study of determination of purpose—consistent, from first to last, in every tone and look—nothing merits more unqualified praise than the character of Captain Craven, portrayed by Mr. Hermann Vezin. The finished style and elocution which may always be found in whatever part this gentleman undertakes are shown in the present instance to the greatest advantage. It is not Mr. Vezin's fault that the part is so abrupt and unsatisfactory. We are greatly inclined to question the object of such a character as Captain Craven, and still more to seriously wonder what becomes of him. Such a palpable villain would not so easily have been allowed to wander where his fancy leads him, neither can such a proceeding prove satisfactory to any audience. But, as we have already said, this circumstance cannot weigh against Mr. Vezin's impersonation, except so far as it arouses regret that there does not exist greater scope for the display of such finished and earnest study. Whatever may be the ultimate fate of "Rachel," it will not fail from want of energy and determination of those who are severally engaged in it. The play arouses our sympathies and attention to a certain point, beyond which the curtain falls, leaving us to realize through imagination that which we desire to do in reality.

Our Omnibus Box.

REGARDING the amateur controversy that has recently been debated with some warmth, it is as well to see, at the outset, what Mr. Henry Irving did say, and to correct what he did not utter, owing to accidental misrepresentation. Speaking confidentially, no doubt, in a society of friends, and in a semi-sportive style, in answer to a toast to his health, gracefully proposed by his old friend Mr. J. L. Toole, allusion was made by Mr. Irving to several matters that affected the dramatic profession. Never dreaming, it is presumed, of the presence of the reporter, or caring to polish his periods for publicity, Mr. Irving is supposed to have spoken as follows:—"For this result [the amateur craze], I cannot help thinking the actors themselves are a little to blame, because of the support they have accorded to these amateur performances. We were all amateurs at one time, and all earnest amateurs hope to become actors; but until they do become actors, I think it is a pity the actors should support them in the way they do by taking part in their performances." Now, surely there is a good deal of sound common sense in all this. Mr. Irving is not in the habit of talking nonsense, and he would be the last man in the world to hinder any legitimate study for the stage. Amateur acting is no more reprehensible than amateur painting, amateur singing, amateur decorating, amateur carving, or amateur writing. Besides, as has been repeatedly urged in these pages, amateur actors are the best patrons of the stage, and take more interest in it than any other section of society. If clever amateurs had not been encouraged, we should have had no Irvings, no Tooles, no actors or actresses at all of any standing whatever. So learned a student of his art as Mr. Irving is not likely to stultify himself. The manager who instantly gave engagements to young Mr. Benson, of Agamemnon fame at Oxford, to Mr. Child the best male, and to Miss Millward the best female, representative of modern amateurs, would scarcely consider it in accordance with consistency to ridicule the interest taken by amateurs in dramatic art. But after all, Mr. Henry Irving is not singular in his desire to encourage probable or possible talent wherever he finds it. Mr. Bancroft, who sat next to Mr. Irving at the gathering where the discussion arose, instantly engaged Mrs. Langtry. The Messrs. Gatti, in want of a clever and capable actress, immediately engaged Miss Eweretta Lawrence. Mr. John Clayton quickly summoned Mr. Gilbert Farquhar to the Court Theatre. Mr. Augustus Harris was not slow in securing the services of Mrs. Maddick. And if all turns out well, there is no reason why these amateurs should not become as useful to the profession as the Arthur Cecils, the Beerbohm-Trees, the Brookfields, and their companions, who have become recognized and clever actors. There is no sin in being an amateur; but the difficulty is what to do with them "until they become actors," as Mr. Irving wisely pointed out.

The enthusiasm that has been expended on the raw material—the artist in its rough and unfinished state—is due to society and the public alone.

They are alone at fault for the nonsense that has agitated the professional world. The dramatic profession by "Boycotting" amateurs cannot check their unwarrantable vanity, but society can, and the public eventually will. Society has gone mad on the subject of acting. From despising and ridiculing the profession, people have gone to the opposite extreme of flattering, fawning upon, and entertaining those who were far better left alone. It is impossible to go out anywhere now-a-days without hearing the most ridiculous nonsense talked about the stage by those who have had no experience whatever of the life of actor or actress. If a smart superficial lady, with good looks and superior self-consciousness, has been deserted by or separated from her husband, if a pretty governess is sick of teaching, if a clever orphan is left penniless, society, as represented by a lot of silly women, is determined that the interesting individual shall go upon the stage. A mere tyro, the rawest of amateurs, is accordingly started upon her career, with a capital of overwhelming flattery. A theatre is hired, friends and acquaintances are bored and bullied into taking tickets, afternoon teas are made into dramatic agencies, dramatic critics are bored out of their lives to take an interest in people of whom they have never heard in their existence, and concerning whose career they are absolutely indifferent; they are presented to this lady, they are introduced to that, they are asked "to be kind" to poor Mrs. Snooks, whose husband behaved so badly to her, and to deal gently with lovely Miss Robinson, who was left penniless by her improvident father, and at last the day arrives. The house is packed with sycophants, bouquets are purchased in profusion, and a forced success is obtained in the teeth of the independent judgment of every honest soul in the house. When bouquets rain upon the stage and applause rings in the critic's ear, what courteous gentleman would dare to say—what he believes to be the truth—that the whole thing is false and contemptible from first to last.

The only way to stop these ridiculous exhibitions is for the public to speak out, and to "damn" the next incompetent amateur who insults their intelligence. The performances are ostensibly for the public, and the public ought not to pass that which is an outrage on art, and a bit of silly impertinence. The profession can do nothing when their ranks are recruited from amateur clubs and societies. The managers can say nothing who engage and profit by every amateur who is talked about. The critics, in the face of a manufactured success, can only state an individual opinion, which is stultified by the shouts, the cheering, and the bouquets. The remedy is in the hands of the people. If there were any serious interest in the matter the independent public would attend, as they did in the old days, and hiss such people off the stage without any ceremony whatever. No amateur in the world, supported by the whole of the flowers in Covent Garden, can stand against the "Off! off!" which they often so righteously deserve. Mutual admiration societies have flourished too long. Let the public voice decide the matter one way or the other. Prejudice, spite, animosity, animus, jealousy, sourness of temper, or Heaven knows what, would be awarded to the critic who dared say a woman or man had no idea of acting, when the theatre is packed with flatterers who agree to act a falsehood,

who say that the acting is good which they believe to be bad, and who applaud with both hands the wretched exhibition of Miss Debutante for the sake of currying favour with Lady Tomkins.

But it is all very well to talk. The stage proper is in need of just as much wholesome supervision as these mixed amateur and professional performances. Now-a-days, it is clearly in the interest of a manager to pack a first-night house in order to prejudice or to stifle critical opinion. Now-a-days a first-night audience has grown to be one monstrous *claque* of formidable dimensions. The free and independent pit and the clear-sighted gallery have apparently yielded up their office, so admirably and fairly exercised, in favour of those who with obvious insincerity applaud that which is silly, encourage all that is vulgar, and summon for congratulation the author of the most wretched plays on record. To be cheered must surely have ceased to be a compliment when the manufacturer of doggrel is treated the same as the literary dramatist. Before we talk about amateurs let us look at home. The critics can do no more than record their conscientious opinions, and, having shown what nonsense has been written, proceed to state how wonderfully it has been received. What is the impression on the public mind? That the critic is doing his utmost to do the author as much harm as he can instead of doing his duty by the public, who are guided by his utterances. Fair-play is a jewel all round, and foul play is never exercised in connection with plays or player; but surely dramatic art suffers as much from unwholesome flattery as it would ever be likely to do from caustic criticism. Columns of exaggerated praise are due to the inertness of the public in not instantly condemning and repressing what is radically silly and intrinsically vulgar. What wonder that amateurs are made out to be geniuses of the first water, when plays are passed that are beneath the intellect of children in an educated age. Dramatic art all round demands the corrective voice of public opinion. Without it comments are useless and criticism is in vain.

Mr. Henry Irving is to be earnestly thanked for having published in a handy and convenient form Talma's "Essay on the Actor's Art" (Bickers and Son, Leicester Square), which was originally translated for and published in The Theatre when it appeared in newspaper form every week. To Talma's criticism, which is in reality a minute description of the art and method of Le Kain, Mr. Irving has added a very excellent and pithy preface, which goes at once to the root of the difficulty of the actor's art. He adds to his remarks at least one "golden rule":—"The actor should have the art of thinking before he speaks. Of course, there are passages in which thought and language are borne along by the stream of emotion and completely intermingled. But more often it will be found that the most natural, the most seemingly accidental effects are obtained when the working of the mind is visible before the tongue gives it words." A most admirable doctrine surely, and highly to be commended. The audience feels the power and influence of such a method, though it fails to discover why. An actor who follows this principle is sure to create attention. But the great merit of Talma's essay, as Mr. Irving has pointed out,

is the stress he lays upon the value of co-operation of "sensibility and intelligence." In point of fact, no actor or actress can be really good without a combination of heart and brain. You may act with very little of either; you cannot influence without the possession of both. Every student of the art should peruse this essay, and, apart from the pleasure he will derive from it, he will, by so doing, be benefiting the Actors' Benevolent Fund, for whose profit it is sold.

When the history of theatrical patents is written, some one will be anxious to quote the following facts, which I clip from that admirable Monday morning article, by the ever-accurate Moy Thomas, in the *Daily News*:—"The forthcoming sale of the Queen's Theatre, Dublin, in the Land Judges' Court in that city, brings to light the fact that this well-known house is carried on under the sanction of a Royal patent granted about eleven years ago, whereby for a space of twenty-one years the owners, lessees, and managers were exempted from the customary obligation to apply to the magistrates for an annual licence. From this extraordinary document it seems that even as late as 1872 dramatic monopoly in Ireland was officially considered to be fully established and very closely guarded. It also appears that the framers of the patent were not aware that the old unjust restrictions upon the minor London playhouses in favour of Covent Garden and Drury Lane had then for thirty years ceased to exist; for, according to the official particulars of sale, it confers only the right 'to act, represent, and perform concerts, feats of horsemanship, fantoccini ballets, melodramas, pantomimes, operatic pieces, and such other exhibitions as are usually given at the Lyceum Theatre, the Haymarket Theatre, the Coburg Theatre, the Surrey Theatre, the Adelphi Theatre, the East London Theatre, and any other of the minor theatres in the City of London, of whatever nature or kind, if decent and becoming, and not profane or obnoxious.' At the same time it is set forth that the managers are 'prohibited from the performance of the regular drama, the liberty of which performance has been granted to the patentees of the Theatre Royal, Hawkins Street, Dublin.' It will be observed that the official draughtsman was not only rather behindhand in his information regarding the history and conditions, and even the names of the London theatres, but also somewhat confused in his notions of London topography; for it happens that no one of the houses which the patent describes as being 'in the City of London,' is either in the City or within the City liberties."

The first of our photographs this month is that of Miss Eastlake, who is now playing the leading female *rôle* in the drama of "The Silver King" at the Princess's Theatre. Miss Mary Eastlake, who is a native of Norwich, made her first appearance on the stage when very young at the Crystal Palace, playing Léonie in "The Ladies' Battle." In December of the same year she acted Annie in an adaptation of Alfred Tennyson's "Enoch Arden," at the Crystal Palace. On the 23rd of the same month she entered into an engagement with Mr. Alexander Henderson for the Criterion Theatre, where she appeared as the heroine in "Dorothy's Stratagem." On

MISS EASTLAKE.

'First thank the Giver of all good.'
—THE SILVER KING.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN SPECIALLY FOR 'THE THEATRE' BY THE ST. JAMES'S PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPANY, 72, PICCADILLY, W.

January 21, 1877, at an afternoon performance at the Gaiety Theatre, she represented Maria in "The School for Scandal." On February 5 she acted Mrs. Lovibond in "On Bail" at the Criterion. On the 14th of the next month she re-appeared at the Crystal Palace as Margaret in "Henry Dunbar." On March 31 she sustained the character of Mrs. Greythorne in the first performance of "Pink Dominoes" at the Criterion Theatre. In May of the same year she again appeared at the Crystal Palace, acting Gretchen on the 16th of that month, and afterwards Arrah in "Arrah-na-Pogue." In September, 1878, she played a small part in "The Idol" at the Folly Theatre, and on December 2 following she played Miss Burnside in "The Crisis" at the Haymarket. On November 20, 1880, she acted Madge in "Where's the Cat?" at the Criterion Theatre, and on May 17, 1881, she represented Constance Leyton in "Butterfly Fever," at the same theatre. On July 2, following, she made her first appearance at the Princess's Theatre as Lilian Westbrook in "The Old Love and the New." At the same theatre, on September 10 of the same year, she appeared as Bess Marks in "The Lights o' London;" on June 10, 1882, she acted Gertie Heckett in "The Romany Rye," and on November 16 of the same year she played Nellie Denver in "The Silver King."

Mr. Johnston Forbes-Robertson, the subject of one of our photographs this month, is the eldest son of Mr. John Forbes-Robertson, the art historian and critic. He was born in London in 1853, and educated at Charterhouse, and in France. Admitted student to the Royal Academy of Arts in 1870, he made his first appearance on the stage four years later (March, 1874), as Chastelard, in "Mary Stuart," at the Princess's Theatre. He next played James Annesley, in the "Wandering Heir," in London, Manchester, and Birmingham. He then joined the company of the late Mr. Charles Calvert, at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester, where he supported the late Mr. Samuel Phelps and others, and acted the Prince of Wales in a revival of the second part of "Henry IV.," Lysander in the "Midsummer-Night's Dream," and Mercutio. Returning to London, he remained for two seasons at the Gaiety Theatre, supporting Mr. Phelps in the following, amongst other, characters:—Peregrine in "John Bull," Faulkland in "The Rivals," Joseph Surface in "The School for Scandal," Cromwell in "Henry VIII.," Antonio in "The Merchant of Venice," and Baradas in "Richelieu." He accepted an engagement at the Olympic Theatre, and in April, 1875, he played in "Anne Boleyn," at the Haymarket Theatre. In July, 1876, he acted the part of the Abbé de la Rose in "Corinne," at the Haymarket Theatre. On September 11, 1876, he appeared as Geoffrey Wynyard in "Dan'l Druce," at the Haymarket. At Easter, 1877, he returned to the Olympic, where he acted for two seasons, appearing as Jeremy Diddler, George Talboys, Sir Frederick Blunt in "Money," and Edgar Greville in "The Turn of the Tide." He then went to the Prince of Wales' Theatre to play in "Diplomacy;" and at the Lyceum he acted in "Zillah," and was the original Sir Horace Welby in "Forget-Me-Not." In September, 1879, he returned to the Prince of Wales', and acted there Dick Fanshaw in "Duty," and Sergeant Jones in

"Ours." Going with Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft's company to the Haymarket Theatre, he played there Lord Glossmere in "Money," and Krux in "School." Returning once more to the Prince of Wales', he acted Sir Horace Welby at that theatre, and Kœnraad Deel in "Annie-Mie." In December of the same year (1880) he went to the Court Theatre, to support Madame Modjeska as Maurice du Saxe in "Adrienne Lecouvreur," Armand Duval in "Heartsease," Romeo, Don Carlos in "Juana," and De Valreas in "Frou-Frou." He played in the provinces with Madame Modjeska; and on June 4, 1881, he appeared, also with Madame Modjeska, as De Valreas, at the Princess's Theatre. On April 8, 1882, he acted Claude Glynne in "The Parvenu," at the Court Theatre; and on October 11 following he represented Claudio in the revival of "Much Ado About Nothing" at the Lyceum.

Mdlle. Eugenie Legrand, an actress who has won considerable success in America, may possibly appear in London ere long. Though a Frenchwoman by birth, Mdlle. Legrand is said to speak English fluently. She was born in Paris, and studied at the Conservatoire in company with the younger Coquelin, and Mdlles. Reichemberg and Sophie Croizette. She graduated with honours and acted for a season in the same theatre as Mdlle. Sara Bernhardt—the Odéon. Thence she went to the Vaudeville, playing in such pieces as "Les Faux Bonshommes" and "Un Ménage en Ville" of Theodore Barrière. Her next engagement was at the London Opera Comique, with Mdlle. Déjazet, where she met with a success in "Le Passant" of M. François Coppée. She then studied English, and came out at Sadler's Wells Theatre as Katherine in "The Taming of the Shrew," afterwards acting there with success as Juliet, Desdemona, and Ophelia. She next acted the part of the Princess Katherine in the late Mr. Charles Calvert's revival of "Henry V." at Manchester. She then played for several seasons in the Australian colonies, and afterwards in America. Besides the characters already named, her repertory includes those of Camille, Adrienne Lecouvreur, Gilberte in "Frou-Frou," Mercy Merrick in "The New Magdalen," Pauline in the "Lady of Lyons," Beatrice, Rosalind, Viola, and others.

On March 28, Miss Wallis commenced a series of matinées at the Gaiety Theatre. She opened with a representation of "Cymbeline," sustaining the character of Imogen successfully, and with much grace. She was ably supported by a company which included Mr. J. H. Barnes and Mr. E. S. Willard. Mr. Willard represented Iachimo with so much art and fascinating manner that his performance became the leading feature of the representation. Miss Wallis afterwards played Adrienne Lecouvreur with much strength and ability, and gave a charming rendering of Rosalind. The fourth performance of the series took place on April 17, when a comedy-drama in three acts, written by Mr. Frederick Eastwood, and entitled "The Decoy," was produced with the following cast:—

Roland Westlake ... MR. JOSEPH CARNE.	Jean ... ... MR. STEVENS.
Captain Ashford ... MR. JULIAN CROSS.	Innkeeper ... ... MR. HERBERT AKHURST.
The Hon. Jack Tandem MR. FRANK STAUNTON.	Madeline Ashford ... MISS WALLIS.
Polisson ... ... MR. H. BEERBOHM-TREE.	Helen ... ... MISS H. O'MALLEY.
Michael ... ... MR. MORELLI.	

This piece proved an unfortunate failure, and not all the efforts of Miss Wallis could secure for it a permanent success. On April 24 Miss Wallis acted Julia in "The Hunchback," a character for which she seemed specially fitted. This was her first appearance in the *rôle* in London.

What time the present century was growing into its teens, a Right Honourable gentleman and a noble Earl met one day in a certain street, which another noble Earl of architectural proclivities, then deceased, had planned —to wit, Richard, third and last of the Boyles, who bore the title of Burlington, after whose wife, the Lady Dorothy Savile, the elder daughter and co-heir of William of Halifax, this same Savile Street by-and-by came to be called. My Lady Dorothy's husband, you will remember, was Garrick's Burlington, and—so, at least, it was shrewdly surmised in Society about the year 1749—a very near relative indeed of that lovely Eva Maria Veigel, then better known by her Gallicized *nom de théâtre*, La Violette, who, on the 22nd of June in the year above mentioned, became the wife of David Garrick, Esq., co-patentee and manager of Drury Lane Theatre. Mr. Garrick's successor in the patent and the management was eventually the Right Hon. Richard Brinsley Butler Sheridan, and the noble Earl whom Mr. Sheridan met that morning in Savile Street—or Savile Row, as it was then beginning to be called—was my Lord Guilford, a son of the sometime Premier who, besides his title, had inherited something of the "infinite wit and humour" with which Burke has credited his sire. Mr. Sheridan had recently taken a house in Savile Row—No. 14—and, like the amiable paver of Pandemonium that he was, steadfastly purposed to lead a new life from the date of the indenture he had just signed. There were, he told the Earl, to be henceforth no more irregularities. "We shall now," Mr. Sheridan said, with his air of perfect conviction—"we shall now go on like clock-work." "Aye," returned my Lord, with a considerable grin, "to be sure you will—tick, tick, till the clock stops."

The object of this little pleasantry laughed at it no doubt, just as frankly as its author. Richard Brinsley had gone on "ticking" so long, and so successfully, as it would seem to him, that he did not believe in the stopping of the clock at all. When he had ticked himself out of No. 14, he took another lease—that of No. 17—and another batch of good resolutions one may be sure. When from No. 17 he was haled to the Took's Court sponging house, though he wrote that philippic to Whitbread, though he wept at the indignity the bailiff's clutch had done his person, yet Whitbread found him next morning in Cursitor Street, confidently calculating on his return for Westminster, where the proceedings pending against Lord Cochrane were providentially to cause a vacancy. Six weeks before the end came he indited that "afflicting note" which Tom Moore and Rogers found on the latter's table in the small hours of the 16th of May, 1816. "I am," he scrawled, "absolutely undone and broken-hearted. . . . . They are going to put the carpets out of window, and break into Mrs. S.'s room, and *take me*. For God's sake let me see you." And lo! when Tom visited him, by-and-by, he found him full-voiced and bright-eyed, chirping over the price he was going to get for the collected edition of his plays, and

certain as ever of being able to put everything all right, once he were out of bed. Only at the very last, perhaps, though he had had a bishop to read prayers at his bedside, did he, or would he, realize that "all the wheels were down." As the shadow of death fell upon him, they heard him say, "Good-bye." Then, in that front bed-room of No. 17, two hours later, on the stroke of noon, that first Sunday in July, the clock whereof my Lord Guilford had spoken stopped for good and all.

Dublin amateurs have for a long time past been regarded as a "secret society"—they were known to exist, but no more; at length they have been brought to light, and the result has been a perfect explosion of performances. The first occurred on March 19, at the Gaiety, in aid of the Drummond Institution, under the patronage of the Lord Lieutenant and the Countess Spencer, the plays produced being the one-act drama, "Our Bitterest Foe," and Mr. G. W. Godfrey's comedy, "The Parvenu." The performance was in every way excellent, certainly one of the best that has yet been seen in Dublin, the cast including Captains Somerset Maxwell, Fowns, and McCalmont, names well known to dwellers by the Liffey; they were assisted by Miss Clara Cowper of the "Compton" Company, and Mrs. Kemys of the "Court" Company. Captain McCalmont is now as well-known a figure on the Gaiety boards, as on the daisies at Punchestown, and possessing considerable natural humour, always makes his part, at least, go well, and the present instance was no exception, his representation of Mr. Ledger being very fine. Miss Cowper's reputation was made in Dublin long ago, when playing with the "Compton" Company, yet we have never seen her to better advantage than in the part of Mary Ledger, which she acted with easy unaffected grace. Mrs. Kemy's Gwendolen Pettigrew pleased everybody, her appearance was prepossessing, and her voice and elegance enhanced the beauty of the character considerably. Captain Maxwell was evidently at home in the part of Charles Tracy, consequently his audience felt at home too, and he also appeared to advantage in the opening piece as Henri, as did Mr. R. Martin as the Prussian General.

The next performance in Dublin was on Tuesday, March 20, also at the Gaiety, and was given by Mrs. Proctor in aid of the funds of the Coombe Hospital. Three short pieces were presented—"Perfection; or, the Lady of Munster"; "Who Speaks First?" and "Betty Martin," the intervals being filled up by vocal selections. Mrs. Proctor appeared in all three plays—as Kate O'Brien, Mrs. Ernest Militant, and Betty; she was good in all, but decidedly best as Mrs. Militant, playing this character with perfect self-possession, and obtaining hearty applause. Mr. Proctor played well as Sir Lawrence Paragon; while Mr. Pim as Ernest Militant, Mr. Battersby as Charles, and Mr. John Percival as Captain Charles, were moderately good, and Miss Parkinson acted capitally in the *soubrette* part.

The third venture was made by the "Rathmines Histrionic Club" at their *bijou* theatre in the Rink, the pieces played being Mr. Boucicault's "Kerry" and Mr. F. W. Broughton's "Withered Leaves." This performance took place on March 29. "Kerry" was repeated the next night, with the addition of the farce, "Done on Both Sides." This is at present the only organized club in Dublin, and enjoys considerable popularity, but a mistake was made in attempting to perform "Kerry." The title *rôle* was certainly well filled by Mr. Marslen, the star of this particular system, but the other parts were weak in the extreme. Miss Wallace as Mrs. Desmond did try occasionally to shake off the drowsiness which seemed to have descended on herself and the others. The mesmeric influence proved too strong, and when the curtain descended it was to a depressed audience. Mr. Crofton (Gerald Desmond) came on the stage apparently looking for something which up to the fall of the act-drop he had not found. Miss Maud May as Kate pitched her voice in so high a key as to be scarcely intelligible. There was a decided improvement noticeable in the comedietta, in which the amateurs were more at home.

On April 12, a theatrical event of more than local interest took place in Hull. This was the production of a new play by Mr. T. W. Robertson, son of the author of "Caste." In addition to any hereditary talent for play-writing he may possess, Mr. Robertson has the more certain advantage of an actor's practical acquaintance with the stage, although it must never be forgotten that the author of "Caste" was a stock actor for many years before he abandoned the stage for literature. His first experiment bears the pretty, sentimental title, "Other Days." If sub-titles were fashionable, it might be called, "Other Days: an English Idyll;" for it is, in its main outline, a simple tale of English country life, set in a background of fields and hedgerows, within sight of the sea. It tells how a London actor came to a little village on the coast and won the heart of the vicar's niece; how he vindicated his profession against some rather coarse clerical abuse, and acted with generosity in forbearing to offer his hand to a girl who, in the opinion of her friends, would be degraded by its acceptance; how this generous act, together with the discovery of his close relationship to the vicar, defeated its own end, secured the happiness of the lovers, and, as the "tag" has it, reconciled Church and Stage.

It will be seen that Mr. Robertson has boldly adapted to stage purpose what is, in reality, a disagreeable subject—the social disqualification that some people would still impose on those who make the theatre their profession. It may be doubted whether a subject that requires such delicate handling is good material for a first play. Apart from its subject-matter, "Other Days" is open to criticism on the side of construction. It seems gratuitous, for example, to invent a long story to prove that the actor is the parson's son. A reconciliation might have been effected with less strain on the imagination. Besides, this way of healing the difference destroys half the moral the writer is trying to point. He

should have made the reconciliation between members of professions, vulgarly supposed to be antagonistic, natural and spontaneous. He ought not to have, in a manner, forced the actor down the parson's throat by making them father and son.

But, in spite of these things, Mr. Robertson has produced a play which friends of experience in his profession are right in saying is not a great play, but one of considerable promise. It is marked throughout by a real appreciation of the sentiment of English country life. It contains no exciting incidents. Instead, we have portraits of the familiar characters of village life, the venerable parson with the narrow ideas of some of his class, the doctor with a rude, caustic wit redeemed by much good nature, the old verger and gravedigger with the characteristics, half pathetic, half humorous, of his order. "Other Days" is simply the tale of an eventful day at a country parsonage, told not without skill.

Never, in my humble opinion, has Miss Fanny Leslie proved herself to be such an artist as by her performance of Prince Caprice, in the gorgeous entertainment known as "A Voyage to the Moon" at Her Majesty's Theatre. To identify such a lady with burlesque, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, is to underrate a very remarkable talent. Combined with a vivacity and spirit that are absolutely infectious, always working at a part without unnecessarily obtruding her individuality, merry but never forced, and lively without showing a trace of exaggeration, Miss Leslie is an example to the lighter comedians of the lyric stage. But in her singing there is a far higher art. When she has a ballad to sing she charges it with feeling and true dramatic expression; when she has a song to act as well as to sing, she throws all her nature into the interpretation of it. Indeed, few people had any idea how well Miss Fanny Leslie could sing until she appeared as Prince Caprice, and added such spirit and intelligence to an excellent entertainment.

There has passed away another link between the theatrical memories of the past and present. Down at Shanklin, in the Isle of Wight, the proprietor of one of the most charming and cosy hotels I have ever visited, lived Archibald Hinton, who was once intimately connected with the popular amusements of the hour. Long years ago, in the pretty gardens at Highbury Barn, Hinton was ever delighted to welcome to his house the theatrical artists, the singers, and the literary men of the day. From there he flitted to the Anerley Gardens, near Norwood, having ever a taste for continental and *al fresco* entertainments, now closed up and forbidden by a senseless and inane form of legislation. Once more he moved to Cherbourg, in France, where he kept an excellent hotel, then to Hayling Island, and last to that sunny retreat at Shanklin where, in just such lovely spring weather as we are now enjoying, I have had many a walk and talk with the interesting old gentleman, who was never so happy as when he had under his roof any one connected with literature, the drama, or the fine arts. Now that the time has come round again for a pilgrimage amongst the

wild flowers growing about Shanklin, the Landslip, and the Undercliffe, I feel that I have lost an old companion, who had a bright memory, well stocked with theatrical lore. A more active-minded and energetic man I never met.

The play of "Shadow and Sunshine" by Mr. R. Palgrave, which was produced for the first time in Edinburgh on the 30th of March, by Miss Bateman, is likely to prove a pleasant change to "Leah." Mr. Palgrave's drama is pretty sure to become popular, as in addition to an interesting plot, several of the characters are very ably drawn, and the piece is studded with some remarkably strong situations. In the first act we are introduced to two brothers, the younger of whom, in good old Jacob-like fashion, has succeeded in getting the father's blessing and fortune, and not being an individual who cares about doing things by halves, he marries the girl who is unfortunately loved by the elder brother as well. That worthy being a man of as little principle as fortune, poisons Guy Dangerfield, the successful brother, and succeeds even in partly throwing suspicion on Alice, the wife, as the murderer of her husband. The second act commences six years after this, when we find that Alice has taken unto herself another husband, —to wit, a Martin Elmsley, a worthy soul, who never dreams of his wife having been tried for the murder of her first husband. The wicked brother again appears on the scene under the name of Dalton, and by working upon the poor woman's fears, induces her to flee from her home. The plot at this stage is further complicated by Jack Dangerfield, a son of Alice's, and a suitor for the hand of Elmsley's daughter, Maude, who is also wooed by the son of Hester Steel, an old admirer of Elmsley's. Mrs. Steel, her son, and Dalton manage not only to drive Alice to the verge of despair, but succeed through it in feathering their own nest in a round-about way, till the arrival of Jack from a long voyage, who, with the co-operation of Delper, a most humorous detective, turns the tables, getting Dalton arrested, and restoring Alice to the love of her husband. The characters, particularly those of Alice, Hester Steel, and Delper, show much cleverness in their drawing. The dialogue is concisely written and free from forced wit.

The last night of "Caste," as performed by Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft and their admirable company at the Haymarket Theatre on Friday evening, the 13th of April, 1883, was no less memorable an event than the first performance of "Caste" at the Prince of Wales' Theatre on April 6, 1867. I happen to be one of the odd dozen or so of spectators who were present on both occasions, and nothing could well efface the impression that both evenings created on the mind. The night in 1867 was the turning-point in the career of the Robertsonian comedies, and the foundation of the success of Mrs. Bancroft's enterprise. Doubts had been freely expressed as to Robertson's position as a dramatist when "Society" was produced. They disappeared a little more when "Ours" became famous; and on the principle that there is luck in odd numbers, they vanished completely with the triumph that "Caste" obtained. This was the foundation of the

fortune of the dramatist, and equally so of his enterprising friends at the Prince of Wales' Theatre, who had so thoroughly believed in his talent. It is quite true no doubt that Robertson could scarcely have become the Robertson that he was, and the Robertson as we now know him to be, without the assistance of the inimitable art that he called into play; but at the same time it must in all candour be acknowledged that it was Robertson who fitted every individual member of the company like a glove, who studied their individual eccentricities and idiosyncrasies, and who put forward the talent of all in the best possible light.

The only false note in the natural sentiment displayed on what has been most erroneously called the "farewell performance" of "Caste," was, to my mind, the consistent and apparently intentional ignoring of everything connected with the author of "Caste." There seemed to be a determination to emphasize the fact that because Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft and Mr. Hare will play in "Caste" no more—not because the public do not desire to see them in their old parts, but because they have come to a conclusion which the public are bound to respect—that therefore "Caste" is a dead play until the end of time. For my own part, I do not believe that I for one shall ever see again such a Polly Eccles, such a Captain Hawtree, or such a Sam Gerridge. To my mind, such perfect acting in its way cannot be found. But I do not desire to force that opinion upon posterity. Many of us even thought that we should never see again such an Eccles as George Honey, or such an Esther Eccles as Lydia Foote; but we lived to find that we were wrong. Seeing, then, that "Caste" is just as much a standard play now as it ever was, seeing that it is just as open to the management of the Haymarket Theatre to put it up in 1885 as in 1883, seeing that the vitality and popularity of the play has been proved by the recent demonstration, it strikes one as being a little hard that the future of "Caste" should be prejudiced in the eyes of the public and of its present possessors. All that has happened is that the plays of Robertson pass into the possession of the son and daughter—both artists—of the man who helped to make the fortune of the Prince of Wales' Theatre. They belong henceforward to the natural heirs of the man who wrote them, and it may occur to many that the grace of relinquishing the copyright would have been heightened by passing them on with goodwill to Mr. Robertson's children, and by wishing them well for the future, instead of so strongly insisting on the fact that the "farewell performance" of "Caste," as we have seen it, is virtually the death of "Caste" now and for evermore. No one can have studied the acting of Mrs. Stirling as the Marquise, of Mr. David James as Eccles, and of Miss Florence Gerard as Esther, without coming to the conclusion that in some respects "Caste" is better played now than it was sixteen years ago. Why should it not in many respects be as well played sixteen years hence? For the life of me I cannot see. The author of "Caste," still less his descendants, were surely not the persons to be stultified in any compliment paid to Robertson's old and well-tried companions.

The demonstration on the last night of "Caste," the flowers, the cheers, the enthusiasm, and the tears, were in reality a very proper tribute to the combined genius and skill of Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft and Mr. Hare, who met

together again on the stage after a long separation. Had each one or all of them been taking a farewell of the stage, they could not have been greeted with greater affection and respect. Never did those artists more thoroughly deserve so marked a compliment, for they have one and all done much for the stage that they so conspicuously adorn. The evening exhibited so much heartiness and goodwill that it is all the more to be regretted that there should be one false ring in the sentiment, and one that could so easily have been corrected. To publicly announce that "Caste" or "School" are played "for positively the last time" is absolutely inconsistent with fact. The best possible authority for the contradiction is that of the present owners of their father's copyrights.

In the matter of Justinian Bracegirdle and a "Commentator," whom I mentioned here lately, a correspondent tells me that, by his will, dated October 22, 1625, a certain bearer of the name "devises to his executors, &c., the Rectory of Mevis Ashby, in the county of Northampton, and the lands held therewith, for the maintenance of a number of scholars at the University of Oxford"—the number of such scholars at first being ten, and the sum of £10 being allowed to each. My correspondent suggests that this beneficent Bracegirdle may be the same Justinian whereof the "Commentator" made mention; and that, if so, the fact of his being able to dispose in benefaction of such an amount of property would go to show that he was not at all a ruined man, but rather a country gentleman in easy circumstances. Presumably; but dates are against the supposition that this testator was Anne Bracegirdle's father; for she was not born till some eight and thirty years after the date of that will. Her grandfather he may have been. But then, if his circumstances warranted such a bequest, he must have had that decent estate to leave his son, Hume's father, which would, by-and-by, put the latter in a position to "become surety" for those friends who played him false. And so Leigh Hunt's "Commentator" may have been right after all.

It is a curious and at the same time interesting study to observe how the greatest artists of our day differ in their conceptions and modes of portraying the varied emotions which make up the sum of existence, and influence the life of the child just as much as of those who have been brought into contact with the world and gained some experience of its mingled joys and sorrows. The collection of pictures by English artists now on view at the Fine Arts Society, New Bond Street, is an exhibition which endeavours to portray some of the many phases of child-life; consequently it cannot fail to prove attractive, if only from the unlimited scope for individual thought and treatment of which it admits. As may be imagined, each work calls for separate and undivided attention, but even this does not save many of them from the great fault of failing to arouse our sympathies, the reason being that the study so often merges into a portrait instead of losing itself in the subject it attempts to delineate. Out of twenty-two pictures there are but two which can be truthfully affirmed realize to the fullest extent the poetry and imagination existent in the conception of the study. The

sphere of life they represent is so wholly different, that each individual work can scarcely be criticized side by side; but above and beyond this, there exists a sympathetic chord in all which touches our hearts by its simple natural truth. One of them is the work of Mr. Herkomer, entitled "Her Grandfather's Pet," the other "Her First Sorrow," by Marcus Stone. The former is a study of rustic life, and breathes throughout a supreme pathos and homeliness. An old man, whose days may fairly be supposed to number the allotted three score years and ten, is seated in front of the picture, facing us. The fine head, with its heavily-furrowed lines, is admirably portrayed, as is the half-absent expression of the face, telling of a mind which is slipping back to other days, and recalling the joys and sorrows they brought with them. His arm encircles the waist of a little girl who leans on his knee, and whose youthful face, unlike that of her grandfather's, speaks of an entire contentment with her present life, which, happily for her, possesses neither the power of recalling past sorrows nor revealing those which may be in store for her in the unknown future. The exquisitely harmonious colouring blends in with the soft light of the summer evening which steals through the small lattice window. The highest praise must be given Mr. Herkomer for the thoughtful, earnest study which characterizes his work.

The second example we have quoted is, to our thinking, even more beautiful in its touching portrayal of the sorrows of childhood. The figure is that of a little girl of some seven or eight summers, clad in a white frock with deep yellow sash, whilst a single poppy nestles close to her throat. The Gainsborough hat proves a most artistic background for the sweet, plaintive little face before us. The lips are firmly set together with a mute expression of grief, which seems to be trying its utmost to keep the tears back. The grey blue eyes have a weary, heavy look about them, and the cause of all this sorrow is explained by the empty cage the girl holds in her hand, which will never again contain the little songster she loved so well. She treads upon a carpet composed of leaves of that deep reddish tint which bespeak the fall of the year, and these merge into a background of seared withered foliage. It would be scarcely possible to over-estimate the united beauty and pathos with which Mr. Marcus Stone's work is so full.

The two studies by Mr. Leslie, entitled "The First Day of the Holidays," and the other side of the picture, when a fresh term has once more come round, are remarkable for their careful, sound work, but they fail to interest except as portraits, and the same may be said with regard to "A Sonatina," by J. Collier, which represents a girl playing a violin as she passes through an old gallery, the minute, careful painting of which is to be highly praised. "The Captive," by Millais, is seemingly another admirable portrait of a handsome girl, clad in a dress of the deepest blue, and carrying a dish filled with lemons intermixed with dark green leaves. The three studies by Mrs. Allingham are most clever in perfection of detail, which is still further exhibited in Mr. Alma Tadema's work, entitled "Settling a Difference." This picture must be seen to be appreciated, so impossible would it be to give an accurate idea of the careful study which has been bestowed on the in-

numerable objects of glass and silver on the dinner-table, intermingled with flowers and blue china. "The Captain of the Eleven," by P. H. Calderon, is a pleasing study of a handsome boy, but the colouring is inclined to be crude, whilst Sir F. Leighton's "Yasmeeneh" fails to prove attractive from its impossible delicacy of flesh colouring. Lastly, though not least, must we mention the picture by Briton Riviere, entitled "Mother Hubbard." How full of excitement is the mind of this little girl in the large mob-cap, as she timidly looks through the half-closed door, holding back the dog, who gazes into his young mistress's face as though demanding an explanation of her anxiety. This study is remarkable for its combination of power and simplicity, which renders it one of the most popular works of a collection which possesses so much that is attractive and worthy of praise.

Mr. Millais' new picture entitled "The Stowaway," now being exhibited at the King Street Galleries, is deserving of careful consideration, were it only for the evident time and study which has been bestowed on the work. The figure is that of a young boy, clad in the poorest of rags, with naked feet, who crouches against a cask in the hold of a vessel, and with upturned face gazes attentively at the glimmer of light which streams on him from above, whilst he listens half defiantly, half hopefully, for any sound which may come to break the awful stillness and quiet which surround him. It is needless to say that the whole power of the picture depends entirely on the expression of the face, which, left to our own imagination, we should in all probability conceive to be haggard and worn, with that hunted-down look resembling a wounded animal at bay. But such is not the case in the present instance. Instead of a boy who, even at the best of times, has been accustomed to wage war against privation and want, Mr. Millais has chosen for his subject a gently nurtured lad, who, for some unexplained reason, has run away from home to seek his fortune, though being apparently quite incapable of fighting his own battles. The expression of the face can scarcely be called pleasing, and, strange as it may seem, its sense of refinement seems to jar upon us. It destroys the strength and dramatic power which constitute the life of the whole character—take away the defiance of control, the loathing of injustice, and what remains? A pleasing study or not, as the case may be, but nevertheless one which possesses neither the power of arousing our sympathies or exciting our admiration. The subject, as we understand it, depends so entirely on strong dramatic instinct that without it, however beautiful the surrounding work may be considered, it can only be likened to a casket from which the jewel has been taken. Chief amongst the pictures contained in this exhibition is one by G. Pagluz, entitled, "The Naïads," which represents two nude figures of girls, one of whom, with outstretched hands raised above her head, reclines in a shell of pearl, whilst the other with her feet in the pure bright water leans half over her. The exquisitely graceful curves of the two figures entertwine one with the other in a perfect harmony of outline. A flight of seagulls whirl around them in the dark gloomy atmosphere as though foretelling an approaching storm. "Summer Moonlight," by H. Moore, is a charming study of mingled peace and

rest, and the same may be said with regard to "Moonrise," by H. W. Davis. The picture by Frank Holl entitled "Hush," is full of earnest thought, which seems to grow upon us as we realize its perfections and allow them to steal into our hearts.

Again they come, these books of "Readings and Recitations." Well, the more the merrier, for it is a popular and wholesome entertainment, and one in great favour just now, when we hear of "champion reciters," and prizes awarded to the most successful readers of a district. Clergymen must look to their laurels, being, as a rule, wholesale murderers of the Queen's English, and unable either to give effect to their own compositions or to the beautiful language contained in Holy Writ and the English Liturgy. The last book of the kind I have on my table is called "Select Readings and Recitations," by George W. Baynham (London: Blackie & Son, Old Bailey), and it is accompanied by rules and exercises on correct pronunciation, gesture, tone, and emphasis. I have no doubt these rules are very valuable, but the two great things requisite are a good voice and a feeling heart. To these must be added an accurate ear for rhyme and rhythm. There is one part of the arrangement of the present volume with which I cannot possibly agree. Some of the most beautiful poems in the English language are printed as bald prose. Fancy Hood's "Bridge of Sighs," Browning's "Pied Piper of Hamelin," Poe's "Raven," and Longfellow's "Death of Minnehaha" being printed as if they were written in prose! How is it possible to convey the natural effect if the metre is wholly destroyed? Space economized by such a process is dearly earned.

Apropos of "Jonathan Bradford" and the "Silver King." That peculiar playwright who to his patronymic Ball, prefixed his mother's maiden name, Fitz, and so became Fitzball, had, of course, when he came to do "Macaire" into what he was pleased to call English, no insurmountable scruples to prevent his heightening the interest of his piece by appropriating for two of its characters the real names of two prominent personages in a tragedy of real life, still remembered in 1833—to wit, Jonathan Bradford and Squire Hayes. The real Jonathan, however, was not at all the virtuous victualler which the exigencies of the French piece required Mr. Fitzball to make him out. He undoubtedly "went for" the Squire with that carving knife. The Squire's servant, though, having been beforehand with Mr. Bradford, the latter was presently found, just as an audience sees Denver, lethal weapon in hand, gazing at the corpse of his intended victim, "in a state of horror and astonishment." So far the "situations" are identical. The essential difference, of course, is that whereas Denver convinces himself he is a murderer, the Bradford of actuality found it impossible to convince anybody that *he* was not.

Turning over Mrs. Carlyle's recently published "Letters" just now, I came across the following story of Macready. The actor and his wife had come to make a morning call in Cheyne Row:

"Geraldine," says Mrs. Carlyle, "professed to be mightily taken with

Mrs. Macready, not so much with William. Poor dear William! I never thought him more interesting, however. To see a man, who is exhibiting himself every night on a stage, blushing like a young girl in a private room, is a beautiful phenomenon for me. His wife whispered into my ear as we sat together on the sofa: 'Do you know, poor William is in a perfect agony to-day at having been brought here in that great-coat? It is a stage great-coat, but was only worn by him twice; the piece it was made for did not succeed, but it was such an expensive coat, I would not let him give it away; and doesn't he look well in it?' I wish Jeannie had seen him in the coat; magnificent fur neck and sleeves, and with such frogs in the front. He did look well, but so heartily ashamed of himself."

Macready, by the way, could not always have been so acutely affected, when he wore off the stage a garment contaminated by connection with "the wretched art which I have been wasting my life upon," as he was pleased to call making £2,000 or £3,000 a year. Dickens sends him a note one evening from Devonshire Terrace, reminding him that he once gave the world assurance of a waistcoat. "You wore it, sir, I think, in 'Money.' It was a remarkable and precious waistcoat, wherein certain broad stripes of blue or purple disported themselves as by a combination of extraordinary circumstances too happy to occur again. I have seen it on your manly chest in private life. I saw it, sir, I think the other day." And so on, winding up with a request for the loan of this astounding habiliment to show to his tailor "as a sample of my tastes and wishes." Now this note was written in 1845, some five years after "Money" had been produced. Perhaps the "contamination" had been worn off by then.

Mrs. Alfred Maddick was, I cannot help thinking, ill-advised to enter upon her career as an actress with so ambitious a programme. The profession she has chosen to adopt is as much open to her as to any one else; but how could she save by a miracle hope to succeed in the days of good sound acting as Lady Clancarty or as Julia in "The Hunchback," without learning how to express the passion she doubtless feels, or to interpret the dramatic despair that is at the root of both characters? Such a beautiful stage face has not been seen since Adelaide Neilson first took London by storm, and it will doubtless be urged that at the outset this gifted actress had little to recommend her but her beauty and grace. Those who say so can never have seen her play Juliet originally at the Royalty Theatre, and at a scratch performance. I did; but, apart from her rough accent and provincial voice, there were the signs of very remarkable power, passion, and intense feeling. It was a rough diamond, but it was a diamond for all that. Mrs. Maddick has far more than Miss Neilson's difficulty of voice to contend with. She has a natural grace, ease, and elegance, such as we rarely see upon the stage; but at present the spectator does not find that carrying-away force, intensity, and enthusiasm that are the passports to success. It is not so much that the voice is weak, unconvincing, and refuses to do the bidding of the owner of it; the real truth is, that behind the voice there is but little prompting of passion or deep feeling. What

Mrs. Maddick did at the first performance at Brighton, and subsequently in London, was wonderful enough for a novice; but it was not the kind of convincing acting that would at present recommend itself to the general public. I am bold enough to think that Mrs. Maddick, in her natural ambition to succeed as a star, has mistaken the line of character in which she would show to the greatest advantage. Comedy is evidently her *forte*, and not strong sentiment. She can coquette, but she cannot convince. She would play, for instance, Lady Betty Noel far better than Lady Clancarty. She would enact Helen infinitely better than Julia. The mistake of inexperience can be rectified, but inexperience itself cannot award the sensibility that gives music to the voice and intelligence to every expression. In these days, when there is no provincial school and few opportunities for any actress to learn her business anywhere, we must not be too hard on the ambition of *débutantes*. But they must remember that the public knows more about good acting than it ever gets the credit for, and at present they will only have the best for their money.

The plays in which Mrs. Maddick has been engaged have, however, been extremely interesting in that they have drawn attention to the sudden and determined influence upon the art-loving public of Mr. E. S. Willard as an actor of rare skill and expression. We have to go back to the early days of Mr. Henry Irving to recall an artist who in character parts has shown such a sensitive appreciation of character, or has presented us with such a rare delicacy of treatment as Mr. E. S. Willard in the character of King William in "Clancarty." It is quite true that the part has been well played before, it lends itself readily to effect by means of the contrast to other characters in the play, and by the quick changes from melancholy to humour and from humour to subdued pathos. But it has never before been so acted as to startle an audience by its significance. Mr. Willard shows, what Mr. Irving has so often shown, a skill in conveying the working of the mind on the actor's face. It is not merely what is commonly called character acting, but the actor for the moment becomes the character he personates. No one but an artist out of the common run of artists could convey so clearly and so accurately those waves of expression on the human face. In this King William we see the abiding sadness, the melancholy induced by an irreparable loss, but ever and anon the sorrow-stained face breaks into curious smiles or is illumined by old records of a pronounced but subtle humour. The face indeed of the actor is a study from first to last; he conveys as much when he is silent as when he is sharing in the dialogue, and from such a performance as this the impression appears to be growing that Mr. E. S. Willard is not merely a skilful interpreter of melodramatic villains, but a very remarkable actor of rare finish and high intelligence. As yet, so far as London is concerned, he has done nothing more than to begin by degrees, and by doing so to work himself gradually and persistently to the front. His talent has never yet been severely taxed, and no one can possibly tell how far he may succeed or how far he may fail. Over and over again the actor's coolness and *aplomb* have been recognized: he has recently shown a command over the

pathetic stop. He has begun modestly, and, being an artist, is not likely to hurry the test that must come sooner or later. But I venture to think that if Mr. Willard were to venture on such a character as Louis the Eleventh, for instance, there would be some excitement to see the result.

An amateur dramatic entertainment was given by the officers of the Second East York Artillery Volunteers, at the Public Rooms, Hull, on March 28. The pieces selected for representation were the comedy-drama "Alone," by Messrs. J. Palgrave Simpson and Herman C. Merivale, and Buckstone's well-known farce, "The Rough Diamond." Both were capitally rendered, and the entertainment passed off most successfully. In the first-named piece the part of Colonel Challis was admirably given by Mr. M. Grant-Dalton; Mr. Bernard Barton performed capitally as Stratton Strawless, Mr. B. S. Jacobs was well suited in the part of Dr. Micklethwaite, and Mr. G. W. Pyburn was passable as Captain Cameron. Mrs. W. H. Wellsted (Miss Elise Maizey) played most effectively as Maude Trevor, and Miss Dibb represented Mrs. Thornton with an ease and grace which were most charming. In the "Rough Diamond" the character of Margery could scarcely have been in better hands than those of Mrs. Wellsted, who kept the audience in continued merriment by her performance. She was ably assisted in her effort in this direction by Mr. W. H. Wellsted as Cousin Joe, his make-up and acting of the character being perfect. Lieut.-Colonel Pudsey may also be complimented on his rendering of Sir William Evergreen, and Mr. J. Allan-Jackson made a very excellent Lord Plato, while Mr. J. G. Smithson was tolerably successful as Captain Blenheim, and to Mrs. Pudsey was entrusted the rendering of Lady Plato.

Mr. Percy F. Marshall recently gave a performance at the Ladbroke Hall to a well-filled and enthusiastic audience, when "Meg's Diversion" was played, the occasion being Mr. Marshall's last appearance as an amateur. His conception of Ashley Merton was good; the action was not strained, and Mr. Marshall's elocutionary powers were used to some effect, but he lacked energy. Another fault lies in his failing to thoroughly imbue himself in his character. The support given to Mr. Marshall was fair. Mr. Conyers Norton was well suited as the Farmer. Mr. Henry A. Stacke was a rather forced Jasper, Mr. T. E. Forster an excellent Roland, and Mr. F. Upton an exaggerated and absurd Eytem. Miss Eleanor Rothsay played Meg charmingly, Miss Kate Erlam made a spirited Cornelia, and Mrs. Lennox-Brown a humorous Mrs. Netwell. After the performance of Mr. Craven's drama, Mr. Marshall delivered a farewell address, and being recalled, asked the audience "to kindly remain for the last piece, 'Uncle's Will,' as this was considered by many of his friends to be his best effort." He was undoubtedly good in this, and played in a cool yet jovial style without being boisterous. Mr. S. P. Platt as Mr. Barker, and Mrs. T. C. Collett as Florence Marigold, lent good aid. "In the Gloaming" was the opening item, Miss Mary Brown deserving mention for her vivacious rendering of Florence Asher.

On April 5, the Owl Dramatic Society gave a performance at St. George's Hall in aid of the funds of the London Fever Hospital. In "Auld Acquaintance," Mr. F. Crawford played fairly well as John Manley, Mr. W. M. Colling was quietly humorous as Butts, Mr. A. H. Davenport a good doctor, and Mr. Frank Hole was made awkward and out of place as Barty. Miss Emily Miller played with great spirit and freshness as Julia, and Miss Louisa Peach made a natural Amy. "The Wedding March" was fairly well given, and the amusing situations brought out with precision and appreciation, but the last act dragged considerably, and the waits were tiresome. Mr. S. J. Barrett, as Mr. Woodpecker Tapping, was full of life, and his acting was very effective. Mr. Frank Hole, well made-up as Uncle Bopaddy, proved himself capable and was very amusing, whilst Mr. A. W. Hughes was an energetic Poppytop. The Duke of Turniptopshire was capitally rendered by Mr. Arthur Hanson. Mr. H. Belding was a capable Major. Mr. Ralph Vincent was good in the small part of Foodle. Amongst the ladies, Miss Helen Palgrave, as the Marchioness, showed a keen appreciation of the satire and wit of the piece, and her by-play was particularly good. Miss Rose Bouverie lacked animation as Miss Bunthunder, Miss M. Ward was too slow as Sophy, and Anna was made the most of by Miss Louisa Peach.

On the evenings of April 5, 6, 9, 10, 11 and 12 theatrical performances were given on board H.M.S. *Rainbow*, lying off Waterloo Bridge, by members of the Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers' musical and dramatic club. The proceedings may be regarded as successful in every way. The stage and auditorium were placed between decks, and were lighted by means of the Swan electric lamps. The work of lighting was carried out by Messrs. Laing, White and Wharton, the necessary electric current being supplied from patent batteries provided by the Duplex Company. The lights burnt steadily and with great brilliancy. The programme on each evening consisted of "Meg's Diversion" and a new musical farce in two acts, written by Mr. Charles F. Fuller and composed by Mr. Campbell Williams, entitled "The Fifteenth Century." In Mr. Craven's drama the best performance was the Jeremy Crow of Mr. Windham Cutter. Meg was played with success by Miss Florence Worth, who should suppress a tendency to being over-serious. The new musical piece is well written, and some of the music is bright and pleasing. The idea is this: A gentleman is musical-mad, and he has, moreover, a craze to live in an old-time castle. So his son and his daughter's sweetheart take him to a dilapidated castle and soon cure him of his craze. The principal part was acted with consistency by the author, Mr. Charles F. Fuller, a clever bit of acting was given by Mr. Campbell Williams, and Mr. H. Dicker was funny as the page. Miss Rose Roberts was effective as a dissatisfied servant, and Miss Lily Meredith was pleasing as the daughter.

A constant correspondent writes:—Thinking it may be interesting to the readers of THE THEATRE, who have perused Mr. Dutton Cook's Article on Joe Miller in the March number of the Magazine, to read the

epitaph on his gravestone (for which I am indebted to Mr. George Willis's "Current Notes," or "Price Current of Literature," published nearly thirty years ago), I give it, together with the following remarks preceding it:—

"Joe Miller's Jest-Book.—Josiah Miller, the Liston, or Compton of his day, according to the obituaries of the time, died in August, 1738, and was interred in the burial-ground of St. Clement Danes, in Portugal Street, at the west end, near the watch-house, in front of the door of which, occupying the place of the now-kerbstone, formerly stood the parish stocks and whipping-post.

"Yesterday, on passing the gates, I strolled in; the gravestones are all moved, and building materials for the new hospital now obtrude irreverently over the graves.

"These chronicles of death's doings in bygone days—the gravestones—are, I learn, to be used and worked up in the progressive erection, so that the inscriptions in memory of the dead will soon be, if they are not so already, immediately lost.

"Joe Miller's stone I found flat on the earth, at the east end, near the present hospital, the face upwards, with a great beam lying across it. Evidently some curiosity has been excited about the stone, but its present position seems to be the harbinger of its fate; its destruction may be thus foreseen.

"With some difficulty, the inscription being much defaced by the operation of the weather, I transcribed the following:—

HERE LYE THE REMAINS OF

HONEST JO MILLER,

WHO WAS

A TENDER HUSBAND,

A SINCERE FRIEND,

A FACETIOUS COMPANION,

AND AN EXCELLENT COMEDIAN.

He departed this Life the 15*th day of August,* 1738,

Aged 54 *years.*

If humour, wit, and honesty could save
The humorous, witty, honest, from the grave,
The grave had not so soon this tenant found,
Whom honesty, and wit, and humour crown'd;
Could but esteem and love preserve our breath,
And guard us longer from the stroke of Death,
The stroke of Death on him had later fell,
Whom all mankind esteem'd and lov'd so well.

S. Duck.

From respect to social worth,
mirthful qualities, and histrionic excellence,
commemorated by poetic talent in humble life;
the above inscription, which Time
had nearly obliterated, has been preserved
and transferred to this Stone by order of
Mr. Jarvis Buck, Churchwarden A.D. 1816."

The jests ascribed to Joe Miller, derived, however, from a variety of sources, were the compilation of John Mottley, a literary drudge of that day. The first edition, "price one shilling," was published in December, 1738, but the title is not dated. The rarity of this dateless edition has greatly enhanced its price. At the Bindley sale, Part II. No. 974, Messrs. Longmans purchased his copy for eleven pounds five shillings.

One is sorry to see the gravestones of such men as Joe Miller is described in his epitaph destroyed, but with such a true and faithful record of his sayings and doings as given to us by Mr. Dutton Cook he will not be altogether forgotten.

Atque iterum Worcester. Miss O'Neill, whilst on a visit there, received from Elliston's successor at the Theatre Royal an offer for an appearance, over the terms of which offer the "star" took time to ponder. Meantime, her host, an enthusiastic admirer of the beauties of his native place, walked his guest to the top of Rainbow Hill under promise of showing her the finest scenery in England. During the ascent, he repeatedly entreated her not to turn till he gave the word, being anxious that she should not, by premature enjoyment, lose the full delight of the prospect from the proper point of view. Now, whether "The O'Nale" ever sat to Thackeray for his Miss Fotheringay or not, it is not unknown that solid "poy" was apt to have greater attractions for her than "pomes," however beautiful, and that the prospect she could best appreciate was that of an increased balance at her bankers. Hence, when, arrived at the summit, with the vaunted panorama all spread before them, her escort, anticipative of her raptures, turned her about with an exulting: "*Now*, Madam! What do you think of it?"—hence the most practical of Juliets quietly annihilated him by saying: "Think of it? Well, I think you had better tell your friend the manager that I really can't come for less than the £100."

Alfred Bunn, *Musarum deliciæ*, Gentleman-at-Arms and Lessee of Drury Lane, gives another and a stronger instance of "the ruling passion," in the case of his intimate abomination, W. C. Macready, and in the shape of a story which the ingenious Alfred fathers upon Elliston. Macready was sick—as it was feared, sick unto death. Elliston called to see him, and was admitted to the sick chamber. There lay Macready, prostrate, exhausted, just able to utter his belief that his last hour had come. Elliston did his best to cheer him; and, by-and-by, when the moribund had apparently sunk into a doze, glided on tiptoe out of the apartment. He had scarcely reached the bottom of the staircase when he was recalled by an intimation that Mr. Macready wished to speak to him. Naturally expecting that some posthumous service was about to be required at his hands, Elliston bent over the dying man's pillow. And then, in broken, feeble accents, Macready said:—"Ell-is-ton, do-you-thi-nk that 'Rob Roy' re-du-ced to-two-acts—would be—a good—after-piece—for—my—benefit?"

THE THEATRE.

June, 1883.

The Autobiography of an Actor.

MY ancestors, time out of mind, cherished a passion for the æsthetic, and I should be a traitor to a noble descent if I diverged from the graceful path first outlined and trodden by the founder of the family, and respectfully followed by several generations of successors. If the reader, who has a strong taste for theatricals, will consult the file of playbills carefully treasured by Mr. Peter Potter, the worthy landlord of the "Weasel and Gridiron" in Ilfracombe, Devonshire, he will find among the troupe who honoured the western circuit, when strollers found favour in each town and populous village, the name of Silverton Singleton, the *jeune premier* and general utility man. That was my *nom de théâtre*, adopted as a concession to an unjustifiable family pride and prejudice. My real name is Adolphus Muggins—that single appellation being a corruption of "Mougainville," the original family name. The Mougainvilles were Norman knights who had followed the fortunes of William, surnamed the Conqueror, cutting throats at Hastings to secure the succession of their chief, and subsequently cutting a few more to maintain the landed property they had earned by their valour. The Mougainvilles stuck to King John and his immediate successors, but when the White and the Red Rose fell out, the family declared for the Lancastrians, and, like them, were upset by the Yorkists. Their lands being sequestrated by the victorious party, they dropped the proud affix "ville," and became simply the Mougains, which euphonious name, in the progress of years and vulgar associations, underwent corruption to Moregains (a misnomer at best, for they gained no more land), thence to Morgan, Muggan, and so down

to Muggins. Lives of great men, the poet says, all remind us "we may make our lives sublime." By parity of reasoning, the lives of little men, if published, may only make their fellow-creatures ridiculous, and as I owe mankind no grudge—for I have been well treated on the whole—I do not feel disposed to go into an elaborate autobiography. I could not—I would not—tell all the truth—and if the story is not unreservedly told it is better left alone.

Well, if I do not believe that a full memoir is worth the trouble of writing, or reading when written, it is at least possible that some of the incidents of my early youth may afford entertainment.

As an old Irish song goes, "At sixteen years old you could get little good of me." There were anxious family debates as to the choice of a profession for young hopeful. My stepfather suggested the law. His telescopic eye saw the Lord Chancellor's wig adorning my brow in maturity, and therefore he would cheerfully bear all the expense of a previous course of Blackstone, Coke upon Littleton, and the statutes at large *en route* to the dignity. My excellent mother, *tant soit peu pieuse*, was convinced that if I went into the Church, I should be sure to obtain the reversion of the Archbishop of Canterbury's mitre. She beheld it in prospect and in her dreams. An uncle, by his marriage with one of my mother's sisters, proposed the army. As he had lost an arm at Maida and a leg at Vimeira, he had a right to request the Commander-in-Chief to give me a commission, and he thought it a pity that such a fine specimen of sprouting manhood as his nephew should be thrown away on what they called the liberal professions, when he would fill a pit so becomingly. But neither the mitre nor the lawyer's gown had any attractions for me. I hated study. "My" only books were women's looks. I might have grasped a sword and trod the path chalked out by Wellington for aspiring youth, but war was played out in Europe, and no commissions were available. Clerkships of any kind were my horror. So I at once selected the stage for a profession.

Now my friends disagreed with me as to my fitness for "strutting and fretting" until I had proved a certain degree of capability by a few amateur displays. The opportunity was not wanting, for amateur acting was then much in vogue, even in the

highest circles of society. There was a "wealthy fool with gold in store" named Coates. He drove a curricle, shaped like a nautilus shell, of a "rose pink" colour, with a bright chanticleer, proclaiming the morn, as a crest. There were silver roosters all over the harness, and the motto of this eccentric gentleman was, "While I live I'll crow." He believed he could play Romeo, and actually paid the manager of the Haymarket Theatre to let him appear. The gold tempted the lessee, and Coates came out in a gorgeous costume, and a hat and feathers looped up with real diamonds of great value. Nature had not been kind to Mr. Coates. When she was engaged in the manufacture of a homely race she selected Mr. Coates's face "as a sample for all the rest." His acting was extravagance run into madness. He out-Heroded Herod, except in the tender passages, and then he was as maudlin as a lovesick schoolgirl. But his dying scene was gravely original. He had the rattles in his throat; he moaned, he groaned, he writhed and wriggled like a worm in the last agonies of dissolution; and finally, with a convulsive start, he stretched himself on his back and expired. The audience screamed with delight, and laughed till their sides ached. "Bravo, Coates!" "Try it again, old fellow!" "*Encore* the death scene—*encore, encore!*" And in the plenitude of his vanity, at so unequivocal a proof of his genius, he rose and repeated the throes, the grimaces, and the final kick. The house redoubled its cheers; there never was such a racket; no other actor could be heard; the play was not permitted to proceed until "Romeo Coates" rose a third time, and making a low bow, positively died a third time, to the chorus of "cock-a-doodle-doo" from every part of the building.

Another famous amateur of the time was Colonel Berkeley, afterwards Earl Fitzhardinge. He lived at Cheltenham, and patronized theatricals. The sad story of his infatuation for the lovely Maria Foote and its results have been told before.

These affairs proved that whatever the drama might be, amateur affairs were either demoralizing or absurd. I resolved, therefore, after a few experiences, to abandon the pastime at once, and go in for the stage as a matter of business. Accordingly, having had the honour of being presented to that perfect gentleman and superb actor, Mr. John Kemble, who had complimented me on my performance (*en amateur*) of Laertes to the Hamlet of Lord

Somebody, at the house of a lady of distinction, who afterwards became Mrs. Coutts and then Duchess of St. Albans, I called on him (Kemble) to solicit his advice as to the best means of becoming a good histrion. Serious in manner, John Kemble was nevertheless kind and cheerful. All the profession respected him, for he was courteous to the humblest super. "I thank you, gentlemen," he would say to a few poor men who had been rehearsing conspirators, senators, &c. &c., for four hours. He gave me some excellent hints, but did not advise my adopting the stage professionally. It was laborious, precarious, and held in disrespect. Actors were "vagabonds" by Act of Parliament. They amused the world, but the world treated them with scorn. Nevertheless I was still bent on being an actor. There was one theatrical agent only in London in 1818. His name was Sims. He had a small office in Great Russell Street, Drury Lane. He sat in his parlour like an old spider, prompt to catch Thespic flies. Around the room, forming the cobweb which enmeshed the giddy, hung files of play bills from the few country-places which had theatres. Bath, York, Cork, and Dublin were the most conspicuous, but there were smaller localites whose larger pretensions were marked by bolder type and longer announcements. Having registered myself as "Sylvester Silverton," and paid the requisite fee of five shillings, I was bidden to take my choice. I selected Biggleston Swopsey, in a western county, because a "juvenile" was wanted. The salary was not of lavishing proportions, but Mr. Sims assured me that there was fine scope for "business," and if I made a name in the town I might get a good benefit. He did not think the common wardrobe would prove very extensive, and as there were no "costoomers" (costumiers) in the town (B. S.) I had better take a few dresses with me—the more showy the better—and procure some tights, or shapes. I forthwith proceeded to equip myself at an old masquerade warehouse where "fleshings" and "shapes" were obtainable; but as they were all "a world too wide" for my slender shanks, I had to be measured for a pair. The tailor was disgustingly impolite—coarse and vulgar in the extreme. When I referred to the tenuity of my limbs, saying they were "rather thin," "Not rather," quoth Snip, "but very thin. Your calves are regularly gone to grass." I certainly was a scarecrow. Falstaff's description of Shallow as a youth applied to me exactly. I was "like a forked raddish."

My dimensions "to any thick sight" were nearly invisible. But the Sartor need not have been so discourteous to a customer. Mr. Bluffins, the manager of the Bigglestone Swopsey Temple of the Muses, Thalia and Melpomene (he called the latter lady Moll Pomona), was a very short man, with a face red enough to frighten and enrage a bull, and he had a sinister cast in one eye. He received me very bluntly. "Oh, you be come at last! Muster Sims he wrote as you was on the way." This, in hard Wiltshire dialect. I explained that I was delayed in getting my shapes. "Shapes be blowed!" exclaimed Bluffins, "you could have had the last man's. He were a thought bigger than you, but my missus would have took them in to fit your leg." He then sent me away to get a lodging and return to him at once. "Sharp's the word and quick's the motion," said he. I was soon suited with a bedroom over a baker's shop at four shillings a week, washing one shirt included. I went back to the theatre—a small edifice which had once done duty as a Methodist chapel (from a sermon to a song!) that had got into difficulties. "Now," quoth Bluffins, on my re-appearance, "are you up in Roderigo? We play "Othello" to-morrow, and Mr. Wandenhoff be coming for six nights. He is the Liverpool great gun." I said I knew the play but not the words of Roderigo. "Well, you can wing it, you know." "Wing it? As how?" "Why read the part behind the scenes before you go on, and then tip them the *dilog.* We rehearse to-morrow at ten. I've got a new Desdemony, and old Walpole is a slap-up Iago." I was going, when he called me back. "Look here: your *sal.* (salary) will be ten bob a-week if you do well enough, but when biz. is bad we share." "Any benefit?" Oh, yes, you stand the expenses and takes what's left." After a walk through the little town, I called at a clean public-house, had a mutton-chop and a cup of tea, and went to my lodging to study Roderigo by the light of a tallow-candle. The next morning at ten I was at the theatre, and Mr. Vandenhoff, who had come by the night coach, was on the stage. We were all formally introduced to him, Roderigo as the "'young un' who had just joined and was a-going to make his *dcboo.*" As there was not too much room to spare behind the scenes, those of the company who were not required in certain scenes sat in the pit. The rehearsals occupied some hours and were carefully gone through. Vandenhoff was an actor of the John Kemble school. A good elocutionist, but cold

and sententious. In a toga or a long cloak he could fairly represent the accepted idea of a Roman consul or a heavy father, but when it was his lot to portray the more passionate and emotional characters, you saw at once that he either had no feeling for the rôle, or deemed the display of rage, love, madness or heroism beneath the dignity of so grave a personage. The words came from his lips because they were dictated by his head—his memory—but nothing sprang from his heart. Thus his Othello was grandly dictatorial, and it seemed a matter of surprise that an Iago should attempt to disturb so adamantine a Moor. His long speeches were lofty; his short ones mere morals—"words." However, he was a gentleman in his bearing and took considerable pains to drill the Bluffin's lot. We played "Macbeth," "Cato," "Hamlet," and "Othello," and I at least learnt that the taste of the day was in favour of a measured elocution. After Vandenhoff we had Mr. William H. Betty, erst "the young Roscius." In his boyhood he had won fame and money by his representation of the heroes of sundry tragedies. His youth and personal beauty, and the intelligent manner in which he recited, following an anxious mother's instructions, caused him to be much patronized. As he advanced in life, however, he realized the ordinarily fatal results of precocity. His style and his face became heavy, and his speech lacked music; he had neither genius, nor inspiration. The title "Roscius" was altogether misapplied, for he had none of the reputed qualities of the famous Roman actor left. I played Alonzo to his Zango, but imbibed no professional sympathy.

Just before Betty had run through his repertory we were startled with the intimation that Mr. Bluffins had engaged the Exeter Theatre, and that we were to tramp thither to perform with the great Edmund Kean, then the mighty star of the hour. I was frantic with joy. I had frequently seen him play in London, but the idea of treading the boards *with* him was an honour that "stood not within the prospect of belief." As soon as the ci-devant Roscius was gone, Mr. Walpole, who had played Macduff, Iago, &c., as second to the two dim stars, resumed his position as leader of the stock company. The old gentleman had been so much accustomed to being shelved when any celebrities came down into our part of the country, that he had lost much of the professional pride which hangs about "crushed tragedians;" still, in spite of poverty and the approach of

the "last scene of all"—for he was beyond three-score-and-ten—he adored his art, and took great pains to render justice to the poetry of the drama. Kind and modest, he helped me much in my reading of parts, which of course was crude and erroneous, and when he stepped back to his old place he raised me to the second rank, and cast me for the characters he had recently vacated. This excited the jealousy of Mr. Percival Monckton (whose real name was Barnaby Timkins, a tailor by profession), and he did not hesitate to give utterance to his feelings in the presence of the other actors. "That's just like old Snivel and Drip" (the opprobrious term he applied to Walpole); "he takes up with that skin-and-bone Silverton, because the feller's got money and finds beer for old blood." This was an outrageous scandal, for the leading tragedian was quite above drinking at my expense, excepting, of course, when I invited him to a frugal supper after an arduous night's performance.

There were always a five-act play and two-act farce, and we all played in both. Monckton had been heard to say that he would *do* for me the first time we had to fight, and sure enough, when he was cast for the fiery Tybalt, and I made my *coup d'essai* as Romeo, he "the prince of cats," as Mercutio calls Tybalt—"the very butcher of a silk button, a duellist, a duellist"—made a tremendous onslaught on my person. Happily, however, I had not forgotten the training in *l'escrime* at the French military school. I was cunning of fence and could come the "immortal passado! the punto reverso!" as well as any youth of my years. So when I found that Monckton was intent on doing me bodily harm I joined issue with him right heartily, and had the misfortune to poke out his left eye. It was purely accidental. I had feigned a thrust at his shoulder, but he knocked up my rapier with his "parry," and the weapon scratched his cheek, and being stopped at the cheekbone for a moment, glanced up and struck the optic. As he fell, according to the business of the scene, he anathematized me in loud tones. "Sarved him right!" cried Bluffins, who had been standing at the wing. Monckton was carried off, and a surgeon was at once summoned to the theatre. He pronounced the eyesight utterly destroyed. I really felt much chagrined at the event and cheerfully paid the doctor's fee; but Monckton (Timkins) was unable to continue in the theatrical line, and returned to the family mansion in Great Torrington, a wiser if not a better tailor.

On the morning following the disaster I was in my room studying Rolando ("Honeymoon") for Walpole's benefit. There came a tap at the door, "some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door." I rose and let in a tall, cadaverous man, with draggled beard. "Mister," said my visitor, "I guessed I'd come soon, as I mean business." "With me, sir?" "Well, yes, look here. I saw you last night at the theatre. I had a mind to make Monckton an offer, but now he's disfigured and sick, and as you seem to act tolerably, I've come to give you a chance." "You are very kind; in what way?" "I'm coming to that. You see, I'm manager of a theatre, and want to strengthen my company. They tell me you draw ten shillings a week. I'll give you fifteen." "May I ask where your theatre is situated?" "Well, nowhere particular. I've a liking for locomotion, and so go about from place to place. People soon get tired of the same thing." "You've a portable theatre, then?" "Yes; it's the biggest thing of the sort anywhere! Next week we shall be at Ilfracombe. There's a fair there, and my traps are gone with the company to be fixed up." "What do you play there?" "Why, 'most everything—tragedy, pantomime, all kinds of dramas. We open with a strong tragedy that's had a great run over the water." "Is it one of Shakespeare's?" "Well, that may be his name; but I've given it a highfalutin title that takes at a fair—'The Murderous Magician of Missouri and the Demon's Dungeon of Dacota.' I've all the scenes ready—and my! won't you get 'rounds' when you fling Greycat over the Horseshoe Falls, after a fight with two pirates and three niggers?" But I did not feel inclined to become a member of a showman's booth, even at the tempting advance of five shillings, and the privilege of dancing on a platform. I therefore civilly declined the offer, on the ground that I could not fairly leave Manager Bluffins, as I had deprived him of the services of one of the company by poking out his eye.

It was now time for the Bluffin's lot to move to Exeter, for, as I have said, the great Edmund Kean was coming down to play for a few nights at the scene of his early exploits. Kean opened in Shylock. It was the part in which he made his first appearance in London, and the one which attracted the attention of Sheridan, or a friend of Sheridan's, when he played it at Exeter. I believe Kean had never visited the scene of his earlier achieve-

ments until that time, and now his old friends and admirers crowded to give him a welcome. I was cast for Salanio and Gratiano, for the paucity of actors, in one particular line, in our company, rendered doubling parts unavoidable. This took me on to the stage in some of the scenes in which Shylock appears, and gave me an opportunity of noticing Kean's reading of certain passages. The first that attracted my attention was in the address to Antonio, in the third scene of the first act. I stood at the wing and listened. The speech, as generally delivered, runs thus :—

"Signor Antonio, many a time and oft, on the Rialto,
You have rated me about my monies and my usances."

The phrase "many a time and oft" is clearly tautological, but as it occurs in more than one of Shakespeare's plays, it passes as a redundancy of verbiage common to the time. Kean, however, made a point of emphasizing the reproach, and gave it thus :—

"Many a time—and *oft on the Rialto!*"

manifesting thereby a sense of greater wrong than would have been inflicted elsewhere. The sting of the "rating" lay in the locality. The Rialto was the great mart or Exchange "where merchants most did congregate," and therefore the Jew felt the degradation the more severely. Another phrase which Kean enunciated with prodigious force, was :

"You called me misbeliever, cut-throat dog."

In almost all the editions of Shakespeare the two last words are connected—"cut-throat" becoming an adjective of the noun "dog." Now, Kean maintained that dogs did not cut throats, and showed that, in later passages, the most offensive epithet applied to Shylock was "dog," *pur et simple.* Accordingly, he rendered the lines thus :

"You called me misbeliever, cut-throat—dog !
And spat upon my Jewish gaberdine."

And his emphatic utterance of the final word of the first line, accompanied by a peculiarly savage look, found a response in the hearts of the audience, for they applauded vociferously. There have been many Shylocks on the English stage, and they have varied essentially in their representations. Macklin, whose interpretation was so acceptable to London audiences

that the portraits of the old man were accompanied by the lines,

"This is the Jew
That Shakespeare drew."

is said to have imparted a certain dignity to the character which removed it from the herd of low, malignant "dogs" usually presented on the stage. Macklin's stature, perhaps, supported the idea that Shylock was grand because he had faith in the integrity of his cause and the strict laws of Venice. Kean had no dignity of manner or appearance. He was very short. All the fiercer passions of human nature found expression in his dark eye, curling lip, harsh voice, earnest manner; but he could be tender and pathetic, amatory and serious, as occasion served or the part demanded. "Richard III." followed the "Merchant of Venice," and I was selected for Richmond because I could fence. Kean was a wonderful swordsman, and, when excited by drink, was a fearful, reckless antagonist. At the rehearsal he told me frankly that I had better be on my guard, for that he was sometimes a perfect devil in Bosworth Field. At night I saw that, if the fight were prolonged to give it the air of a very dreadful struggle for life, I should come off second best; so, rather against Kean's will, I seized the earliest opportunity of killing him in view of the audience. However, he took it all in good part, and invited me to sup with him. Three others of the company were likewise his guests, and we were very merry. Kean drank an amazing quantity of hot gin-and-water, but it did not seem to produce a very powerful effect upon him until long after midnight. He gave us many details of his provincial life, and recalled, with evident sorrow, the companions of his early struggles, some of whom had passed away. He had provided for others at London theatres. As he was not going to play Macbeth, I asked him how he delivered the lines:

"Hang out our banners, &c. &c."

Mr. Kemble used to say:

"Hang out our banners on the outward walls;
The cry is still 'they come.'"

But Kean contended that the outer walls, being lower than those of the castle itself, the banners would not have been seen distinctly from a distance; while the reference to "the cry" denoted that the outward walls were the proper locality whence to view

the approaching force. After Kean's departure for other towns, the performances at Exeter hung fire, until we had a visit from Charles Young, the legitimate successor of John Kemble at Covent Garden. He was a very amiable man, a scholar, gifted with a fine figure and a noble face. His conceptions of the great tragic characters which devolved upon him were usually just, and the only circumstance which detracted from his excellence as an actor was a lisp, of which he was strangely unconscious. When Mathews the elder gave imitations of all the most popular actors then on the stage, Charles Young said to him, "I went to thee you latht night at the Lytheum; your imitationth were very good, but why did you make me thpeak with a lithp?" Young played Hamlet, which I thought very fine, because it was modelled after Kemble's impersonation, but neither of these performers seemed to me to realize the ideal Hamlet. Our performances, when Young left us, came to a sudden stop, for George III., after being confined in Windsor Castle as a lunatic for upwards of a dozen years, "shuffled off this mortal coil," and was gathered to his ancestors. The public mourning was, of course, merely nominal, since no one could really regret an event which removed the good old man from the mental darkness in which he had lived for so long a time. Still, the formality of public grief had to be gone through, and this involved the suspension of all public entertainments for a given time. Passion Week and certain holy festivals are periods of such rigid fastings and mortifications to poor actors, that it did not need the addition of a royal demise to leave them without bread for a few more days. Mr. Bluffins paid us all up, and then announced his intention of moving into Somersetshire and opening at Bath. Bath, once the most famous watering-place of the aristocracy, who swarmed in the winter to drink the bitter waters, whose virtues were supposed to remove the evils acquired by the flesh in a course of dissipation, had altogether changed its social character. Staid personages of the middle classes, who enjoyed a comfortable independence, now usurped the places once tenanted by lords and ladies. There were many men of high literary culture among them, and to those persons a play of Shakespeare's, rendered with tolerable care, was always acceptable. Cut down Shakespeare as you will, to the miserable tenuity of an "acting edition," there is still vitality enough left to gratify even a

voracious appetite and exhibit the unapproachable genius of the author.

The Bath Theatre had for years been one of the principal nurseries of the London stage. Actors and actresses, reared among a sufficiently fastidious community, were sure of a transfer to the metropolis. I therefore quitted the strolling company, and sought an appearance at the Bath Theatre, where there was really no chance for the reception of Bluffins's modest troupe. They went off to Clifton and Bristol, while I remained to pay court to manager Dimond. After two or three weeks of suspense, I obtained leave to appear as Orlando in "As You Like It." The Rosalind of the play was a lady-like, intelligent person named Jarman. She was afterwards a London star, but she committed the mistake of marrying a vagabond called Ternan, who drank up her earnings.

Having had quite enough of country acting, and seeing but little prospect of a summons to London in a professional way, I now determined to relinquish the stage for a time and return home. It was not without some degree of regret that I parted with Bluffins. At our last interview the good fellow said in his homely way, "I tell 'ee what; thee tak'st pains and are quick study, but you want 'face' for a tragic actor. Go in for eccentrics and you'll do." But the voice of the charmer was unheeded.

During the Strike.

A Fragment, after Coppée.

POEM FOR RECITATION.

I, FAMISHED, lean, stood in my emptied hut;
My wife and children stretched their hands for bread,
All but the youngest, a poor fragile girl,
Who lay upon the sacking yonder—dead!
Her sharpened features showed the death she'd died,
And, as her brothers' cries reached my dulled ear,
I, maddened, broke from weak, detaining hands,
And rushed out to the streets; I knew not where!
No children's shouts were heard. In listless groups
Of twos and threes they stood; some talking low

Of those among their playmates who had died,
And how they envied them! Each word, a blow
Struck to my heart. My little daughter's corse
Upbraiding rose before my bloodshot gaze:
I was her murderer—— Great God! 'twas I,
Tool of the Strike! for nigh on forty days
Perforce I had been idle; made to rest
And yield my gage in hope of greater gain.
Meanwhile she died, and should her brothers die?
I would return to work! My fevered brain
Seemed peopled by the phantoms of the grave,
As, running wildly to the drinking-hall
Where were the men, I burst into their midst,
And cried, in tones that reached the ears of all:
"I go to work—you hear? My child is dead—
Starved by the Strike! *Your* work—*you* killed my child!
The rest will die,—I go to save their lives—
I *choose* to work!" My words all hurried, wild,
Rang through the hall. All, silent, stood around;
But one man spoke: "Coward!" he cried aloud.
Coward! My eyes discerned above the throng
My murdered daughter in her infant shroud,
And her hand beckoned! Coward! then my veins
Stood out like cords, as with quick, hard-drawn breath:
"So be it, then," I cried; "their blood is yours—
"I will *not* work: I give my boys to death!"
. . . . The man, who'd spoken, laughed! My murderous glance
Espied there lying on the board a knife.
I seized it, hissing through my clenchèd teeth:
"Her death was yours; as ours, I claim your life!"
A sudden stab—a cry from those around—
He fell—a lifeless thud upon the floor,—
While, through a veil of blood, I saw HER face,
Avenged, my child! avenged for evermore!
. . . . Then, as the men, half-shrinking, gathered in,
As though expectant I should seek to fly:
"Leave me," I said, "I will accuse myself,
"Condemn myself, and then—rejoicing—die!"

M. E. W.

Letters of Mademoiselle Rachel.

By CHARLES HERVEY.

IT would be rather hard on the interpreters of Melpomene if they considered themselves bound to maintain their assumed character off the stage as well as on it, and were consequently denied the privilege of exchanging their tragedy tones for the ordinary accents of everyday life. Mrs. Siddons might, perhaps, have accommodated herself to such a regimen, and probably did, if the "will it wash?" anecdote may be relied on as authentic; and a similar example might be cited in the person of Madame Dorval, on the authority of the novelist Mrs. Isabella Romer, who told me many years ago that, happening to meet the celebrated actress at a Marseilles *table d'hôte*, she was warned by her on no account to taste the eggs, the advice being given with an intense sepulchral bathos which, my informant assured me, literally made her shudder.

Not so Mdlle. Rachel. Once out of sight of the audience, she was no longer Roxane or Camille, but as thoroughly domestic a *bourgeoise* as her operatic colleague—Madame Dorus Gras—now planning a donkey party to Montmorency, now meditating the confection of some "petit plat canaille" for supper. Alfred de Musset tells us, in his "Souper chez Mdlle. Rachel," how, after substituting for her usual attire a dressing-gown with a silk handkerchief round her head, she invited him, together with her mother and her eldest sister Sarah,* to partake of her evening meal, consisting of three tough beefsteaks cooked by herself, a salad, and a huge dish of spinach, to which all present, with the exception of Sarah, who objected to two-pronged forks, did ample justice. This was at the commencement of her career, when the Félix family occupied a small apartment in the Passage Véro-Dodat; but even in after years, when luxuriously installed in her charming Hôtel Trudon, her simple mode of life underwent no change. She

* Subsequently an actress of moderate ability at the Odéon. Unlike her more talented sister, she was extremely stout, and on the occasion of a fancy ball given by Rachel in the Rue Trudon, made her appearance there *en bergère*, and asked her hostess what she thought of her costume. "Well," said Rachel, trying hard to restrain a smile, "if you wish me to say candidly what I think, you look like a shepherdess—who has eaten all her sheep."

abhorred ceremony, and was never so happy as when, surrounded by her own familiar circle, she felt herself at liberty to put aside what she laughingly termed her "tragedy airs," and give full scope to that natural gaiety and keen sense of the humorous with which those alone who knew her intimately would have been disposed to credit her.

By way of illustrating this particular side of her character, it has struck me that a few extracts from her correspondence, selected from various sources, published and unpublished, may not be found uninteresting. Some of these have appeared in Jules Janin's exhaustive memorial of the great actress, two or three are taken from autograph catalogues, and most of the remainder from the originals, which either have been or still are in my possession. The first specimen, written at the age of fourteen, is a note addressed to St. Aulaire, of the Théâtre Français, a very second-rate actor, but an excellent elocutionary master, under whose tuition the youthful Rachel had commenced her dramatic education. She afterwards received instruction from Samson and Michelot.

"July 8, 1835.

"MY GOOD PROFESSOR,—Will you pardon me if I miss my lesson to-day? I have been to the Bois de Boulogne, and as I felt very tired, mamma made me take a bath, and since breakfast I have been in bed. Please answer this, and do not scold me, for indeed I cannot come.

"ELISA."*

Five years later (April 8, 1840) she writes to her mother in the following ultra-ceremonious style:—

"I beg Madame Felix kindly to lend my sister Sarah my lace handkerchief. By so doing, she will infinitely oblige the undersigned, who has devoted her life to her for the last nineteen years.

"Believe me, Madame, your sincerely affectionate

"RACHEL."

Shortly after her first appearance at the Comédie Française, M. Buloz, then manager of the theatre, having written to remind her (on New Year's Day) that her presence that evening in the

* Her usual signature at this period, her baptismal names being Elisabeth Rachel.

"cérémonie" at the close of the "Bourgeois Gentilhomme" was indispensable, received in reply her assurance that she would be punctual, with the subjoined postscript:—

"I have done all I can to get rid of my New Year's Day visitors, but the more I send away, the more arrive. I suppose I ought to have admitted no one; but I am still too young to refuse the chance of being offered bon-bons, more especially as they only come once a year."

In the summer of 1842, Rachel and Bouffé were both starring at Brussels; and the latter, anxious to secure her valuable co-operation on the night fixed for his benefit, wrote to her to that effect, and records, in his entertaining "Reminiscences," the following affirmative answer:—

"I send you, my dear Bouffé, a gigantic YES. I could not reply earlier to your letter, as I received it in my dressing-room, where I had no means of writing. I am delighted to prove to you how proud I shall be to contribute, however slightly, to the success of one of your performances at Brussels.

"RACHEL.

"P.S.—Mind, it must be *your* benefit, and not that of the managers; so pray allow me to settle the matter with them. There must be no deductions on the score of expenses: half the gross receipts *must* be yours. Let me arrange it for you, I entreat. I have just returned from the theatre. A good night and pleasant dreams for both of us!"

"On this occasion," says Bouffé, "Rachel played two acts of 'Andromaque' more admirably than ever. The receipts were enormous, and my share amounted to three thousand francs. She seemed to be even more gratified than I was by this fortunate result."

The next extract from a letter addressed (about 1844) to Desnoyers, stage-manager of the Comédie Française, is altogether of a different nature, and refers to one of the disputes constantly arising between the actress and the administrative committee:—

"I never promised M. Buloz to play 'Phèdre;' first, because he never asked me to do so, and, secondly, because, as he very well knew, I was anxious to play 'Catherine' (by Hippolyte Romand). However, I will not disappoint the committee, and shall be glad,

on the contrary, of an opportunity of showing that, notwithstanding the discourteous treatment I have lately experienced, I do all in my power to be useful to the theatre and my comrades. You may, therefore, announce 'Phèdre.'"

To the same, February 29, 1848 :—

"My medical attendant, having seen in the bills the announcement of my reappearance next Wednesday, absolutely forbids my doing so until the six weeks of rest prescribed by him have expired." Above is written, in Desnoyers' hand, "The illness is a fiction. Mdlle. Rachel's object is simply, by not playing, to force M. Buloz to send in his resignation." (Almost immediately after, M. Buloz was succeeded in the management by the dramatist Lockroy.)

The three following letters, written at various dates, form part of her correspondence with her mother :—

"The last week has been a very fatiguing one, but I have got through it admirably : two performances of 'Catherine' and one of 'Horace,' for the anniversary of Corneille. Thank Heaven, it is over now, and everybody is satisfied—manager, public, and I ; so it is only fair that we should enjoy ourselves a little. Consider yourself invited to a picnic in the forest, exactly as we used to have years ago, when things were not so flourishing as they are now ! My share of the work will consist in putting on an apron, frying the potatoes, and laying the cloth. Yours will be to warm up the soup.

"Rachel."

"St. Petersburg (1854).

"Dear Mother,—Yesterday for my benefit I played Camille and Lesbie. My success, or rather triumph, was complete ; their Imperial Majesties were present. Impossible to count the bouquets thrown to me ; as for recalls, the exact number was seven hundred thousand. The Grand Duchess Hélène sent me a magnificent Turkish shawl ; ah, Madame Félix, how well that shawl will look on your shoulders ! They want me to come back next winter, but I promise nothing, although I have quite made up my mind *never* to return to the Théâtre Français, even if they offered me a hundred thousand francs for six months. And, yet, I feel that it will be a severe blow to me to leave the public to whom I have owed so much for the last sixteen years !"

"New York (no date).

"DEAR MOTHER,—My health has never been better. Were I, even at the close of my American trip, to lose all the money I have gained, I should not complain, if I continued as well as I am at this moment. Kiss my dear children for me. If I were not so fond of the Russians as I am, I should have been rejoiced to hear of the taking of Sebastopol."

To her eldest son :—

"New York (no date).

"I hope, my dear Alexandre, that while your little mother is making a collection of laurels and dollars in America, you will do her honour at the next examinations. Think how happy I shall be when I receive such welcome news. Gabriel (his brother) is still rather too young for me to talk about his studies, but his turn will come in time ; at least I hope so. Your little mother, who loves you both passionately,

"RACHEL."

I do not think any of my readers will be disposed to quarrel with me for reserving as a final *bonne bouche* the following extract from a letter which has been in my possession more than twenty years, addressed to Madame Samson, the wife of the celebrated actor-author of the Théâtre Français, and dated from Interlaken, August 20, 1843 :—

"On arriving at the inn on the top of the Montanvert, we found assembled there quite a little society of genuine Parisians, fresh from the Passage de l'Opéra ; a stout individual, probably a stockbroker of the Bourse, and an habitual frequenter of the Variétés and the Café Anglais ; three young women in travelling costumes copied exactly from the *Journal des Modes ;* and two collegians, doubtless sent there to finish their education. One of the young women fancied she recognized me, for I heard her say, 'How like she is to Rachel!' 'It is Rachel,' replied one of the collegians ; 'I saw her not long ago in "Phèdre," and remember her face perfectly.' 'Pooh! pooh!' retorted the customer of the Café Anglais, 'Rachel is not half so pretty as that charming tourist!' I pass over the discussion that ensued, and grew so warm that it could only terminate in a serious dispute or a bet ; the latter alternative was chosen, but you will never guess what they agreed to wager—*a leg of mutton!*

"The ingenious stockbroker, having volunteered to undertake the solution of the mystery, imagined the following (as he thought) infallible method of penetrating my incognito; we had left the inn, and, supported by the guides, were traversing, not without misgiving, the Mer de Glace, when just as I had safely crossed a fissure in the ice, I found myself face to face with him. For a moment he seemed at a loss how to begin, but presently recovering himself, uttered, by way of soliloquy, this insidious phrase: 'Nature and art, both are admirable!' 'If she is Rachel,' he probably reflected, 'she will be agreeably flattered by the exquisite delicacy of the compliment, and unable to conceal her satisfaction.' As things were, being far more intent on keeping my footing than on listening to what he was saying, I took no notice, and walked quietly on without even turning my head; upon which, rejoining his friends, he exclaimed, 'You see, it is not Rachel, and I have won my bet!' Not wishing, however, that the loss of so important a wager should be incurred by the wrong person, and contriving to return to the inn before the others did, I asked for the strangers' book, and settled the question as follows in my very best handwriting: 'Pay the leg of mutton, Monsieur, I *am* Rachel.'"

Plays in Paris.

WHEN the Saxe-Meiningen Company were performing at Drury Lane, one of the principal actors told me the following anecdote: "An artist belonging to our first theatre in Germany went a few months ago on a starring engagement to one of the score of small capitals of the empire. After the first performance the sovereign of the diminutive State addressed the player, whom he had condescended to receive in his box, some flattering remarks that seemed to forebode a more distinctive tribute of his admiration, seeing that His Highness disposes of a downright menagerie of eagles, falcons, bears, and other heraldic animals, so much appreciated by the followers of Thespis.

"Anyhow, the comedian having performed for three consecutive nights without perceiving any nearer realization of his secret wishes, began to grow impatient, and resolved to shake from his feet the dust of so ungrateful a town.

"The next morning, having ordered an open carriage, he drove to the station, after having told the driver to pass, on his way thither, before the palace of His Serene Highness.

"It was just the hour when the latter was in the habit of taking his constitutional under the verandah, in company with his chamberlain. Perceiving the artist, who did not look particularly pleased, in the distance, His Highness turned towards his companion, 'What is the matter with Herr ——; he seems to be going?' he asked. The courtier's answer was a mute one, a piece of dumb show merely. He pointed to his button-hole, smiling a kind of feeble diplomatic smile.

"'Is that all?' replied His Highness. 'Quick, Herr Ritter; go and fetch me an Order from my cabinet.' In another moment the courtier returned with a small box. As the artist was driving by, the Prince hailed him, and without leaving him time to alight, threw the box into his lap. 'If you must be going, take this as a remembrance; and a pleasant journey to you.'

"The actor tried to stammer a few words of thanks, and continued his journey. But scarcely had he gone a dozen yards when His Highness perceived him making frantic signs. 'What's the matter?' shouts the Prince. 'Serenissimo, there are two,' comes the answer. 'Never mind,' yells back the generous Prince; 'give the other one to the coachman.'"

I shall add no remark of my own about the value one attaches, under the circumstances, to M. Delaunay's receiving the ribbon of the Legion of Honour, or to his change of mind with regard to his retirement from the stage of the Comedie Française. Yes I will, though. It reminds me of a country manager playing Hamlet, for his own benefit in his own theatre, and insisting upon altering all the false exits into real ones, in order to heighten the illusion.

"Look here upon this picture and on this." Whilst M. Delaunay was being decorated and congratulated, and being generally soft-sawdered and flattered by the Parisian press, Georges Bizet's old father was sitting childless at the première of the revival of the masterpiece of his son, and who, Vapereau will tell you, died at the age of thirty-six from the consequences of a chill. Of a chill decidedly. But it is doubtful whether the sudden variation

of the temperature caused the death of the composer of "Carmen" half so much as the blowing hot and cold in the same breath of those Parisian critics who, in 1875, refused to acknowledge what they now so loudly proclaim, namely, the beauties of a score which the whole of musical Europe has hailed ere now as the work of a young and ill-fated genius.

> "Thus after death, if shades can feel,
> Thou mayest, from incense round thee streaming,
> A sense of past enjoyment steal,
> And live again in blissful dreaming."

That's the text, in spirit if not in substance, from which the Parisian press has been preaching, to atone for their neglect during his lifetime of the brave and noble fellow at whom they flung Society's primal curse of originality—to whom they said by word and deed, "Triest thou to be a Mozart, and be famous at thirteen, to gain the prix de Rome at eighteen, to write an opera at twenty? then we will treat thee as the Prince of Cassel treated thine idol, make thy life a burden to thee." And poor Bizet took the hint and died, as did his great exemplar, in his thirty-sixth year.

The Channel has long ceased to exist with regard to dramatic literature, and English playwrights seldom pride themselves upon originality of construction. Not so the French, but their construction generally takes the form of a ladder wherewith to enter their fellow craftsmen's—I had nearly written cracksmen's—premises. The most flagrant case at present is M. Albert's "Père de Martial," produced on the 20th of April at the Gymnase. Not one of the Paris critics has drawn attention to it, though "Le Père de Martial," however, is nothing more or less than a clever—but a very clever—plagiary of "L'Honneur de la Maison," brought out some thirty years ago, and from which Sardou took his "Vieux Garçons." The original was performed some seven or eight years ago at the Princess's, under the management of MM. Valnay and Pitron, with Marie Laurent in the principal character, and an adaptation was produced at the Court some two years ago. But once this fact having been disposed of, "Le Père de Martial" deserves nothing but praise. The rebuilding of the old material is a charming piece of work, containing a succes-

sion of dramatic scenes and incidents that make one regret all the more that M. Delpit should not have sought a more original theme. The acting is excellent. Landrol alone is worth a journey to Paris. His portrayal of the deeply injured and generous husband is absolutely perfect.

"La Vie Facile," a comedy in three acts, by MM. Albéric Second and Paul Ferrier, produced at the Vaudeville on the 19th of May, did not seem to me to contain the elements of a lasting success. The motive is without interest and too slight. The dialogue is very witty. It is difficult, however, to judge on a first night in Paris, especially where the author or authors are celebrities of the press. The piece has been so puffed that the impartial critic is apt to get angry with the mountain bringing forth a mouse. I doubt, however, whether M. Second's colleagues will be able to magnify the mouse into an elephant.

You may expect to hear Léo Délibe's "Lakmé," and Félicien David's "Perle du Bresil," in London next winter. Mr. Carl Rosa was here at the end of May, and I hear that the negotiations he began are likely to terminate successfully .

The remainder of my news is of no importance: "L'As de Trèfle" has been replaced at the Ambigu by the ever welcome "Bouquètière du Marché des Innocents." The Palais-Royal has five one-act pieces, neither of which is a success, two being great failures. The five farces owe their origin to ten authors, who are generally behind at first nights. The stage being very small, you may imagine the effect. It is a pity they do not come at other occasions, for should any hostile demonstration in front take place—which is not at all unlikely, seeing the rubbish which the managers have lately dished up—they might effectually organize a counter demonstration. You may remember a passage in the Life of Macready, where he tells you that the house contained one or three spectators who began hissing; whereupon the actors followed suit, and routed the audience. There is nothing new under the sun. Dickens' "No Thoroughfare" holds the bill at the Gaieté, and M. Fechter's widow payed an eloquent tribute

the other day to the great Englishman's generosity. The French, however, did not believe it. Generosity is the last thing they are likely to believe in.

The revival of Félicien David's "Perle du Brasil," at the Opera Comique (16th May) has brought to the fore Mdlle. de Nevada, an American cantatrice, who has met with great favour in Italy. Seeing that they dare not vent their spite upon Mdlle. Van Zandt, the critics must naturally look for another victim of their Anglophobia. Being unable to find any fault with Mdlle. de Nevada's method or voice, they accuse her of an atrocious English accent. A sample of their generosity.

Irene.

A PLEASANT picture! 'neath the arching trees,
Whose kissing boughs brought shade to sunny land,
And framed by trailing rose on either hand,
She stood, her soft hair waving in the breeze
A very cloud about her; while her eyes,
More tender than an infant's dawning smile,
Half dreaming, innocent of guile,
Vied in their colour with the skies.
The poet-mouth, unpressed by kisses warm,
Just parted, in a smile of pure delight
That Life *was* Life, so glorious, so bright,
And nothing recking of an after-storm.
I, standing there, all hid from mortal ken,
Felt 'twould be sacrilege to break her calm.
Unconscious happiness is Nature's psalm;
I turned, and left her with one low amen!

M. E. W.

Our Musical-Box.

MAY is perhaps not the most musical month, in the sense of mere quantity, of the London season ; but it is invariably rendered interesting by entertainments of excellent quality, first productions of positive or comparative novelties, and numerous débuts of native and foreign executant artists. The operatic stars of the first magnitude do not rise upon our metropolitan horizon until June, when monster concerts set in with overwhelming severity, and the luckless musical chronicler, fairly dazed with "concourse of sweet sounds," is compelled to acknowledge that—a time-worn proverb nevertheless and notwithstanding—one may have a great deal too much of a good thing. May is experimental and tentative ; June, so crowded with "accomplished facts," that it leaves nothing to be desired except a little repose—some slight surcease of delectation. Under so wayward a climatic dispensation as ours, moreover, it is a physical privilege to take refuge from piercing winds, chilling snowfalls, pattering hail, and all the other angry intemperances of May, in a cosy concert-room or well-warmed opera-house, were it only to luxuriate in a genial atmosphere and contemplate human features unpinched by cold, unracked by the throes of neuralgia ; whereas the instinct of self-preservation prompts even the most inveterate *fanatico per la musica* to shun confinement, in say St. James's Hall or Covent Garden Theatre, during the stuffy afternoons and close evenings of June. A certain measure of personal comfort is indispensable to the full enjoyment of a musical or dramatic performance, no matter how good the latter may be in itself ; and such comfort is without doubt more readily attainable in winter than in summer. The English May being, as a rule, an able and spirited revival of winter, is consequently the most comfortable month wherein to partake of musical refreshment in London, seeing that the unwritten laws of fashion condemn us to take our indoor pleasures during the outdoor season, and *vice versâ*.

Last month supplied the musical public of this capital with abundance of enjoyment, more plentifully, however, in the con-

cert than in the operatic line. The Covent Garden programme was on the whole a tame one, and the performances were strictly in keeping with the programme. Such operas as "Trovatore" and "Rigoletto" must still be favourites of a certain class of well-to-do British music-lovers, or the management of our sole surviving Italian opera-house would not persist in reproducing them, year after year; but it is unquestionable that the demand for performances of those works has steadily fallen off for some considerable time past, and that Italian opera, *pur et simple*, is *en décadence* here as well as abroad. People no longer throng the theatre to listen to the music of Rossini, Donizetti, and Verdi for its own sake, as formerly. A star of uncommon brilliancy will always draw full houses, of course, let the musical medium in which that luminary pleases to display itself be what it may. Adelina Patti's name in the bill invariably proves an irresistible attraction, however trivial or hackneyed the music committed to her inimitable interpretation. But, lacking other magnets of such paramount force as hers, Mr. Gye revels but rarely in that acmé of managerial bliss, that is "turning away money," and, as a matter of fact, fails to find that support on the part of the paying public which alone can render even so short an operatic season as that of 1883 a remunerative enterprise. To me, I confess, the prospects of Italian Opera as an institution in this country seem less hopeful than ever this year. The greatest of living prime-donne, finding that she can make as much money as she requires during an annual winter tour in the United States, is not unnaturally disinclined to break up her summer term of rest in order to sing in London for about a quarter of the sum per performance that she earns on the other side of the Atlantic. The results of her amazing pecuniary success in America are unfavourable to the Gye-Mapleson combination here, but by no means unnaturally so. Hitherto, for twenty-one years past, she has sung on an average a score or so of times each season at Covent Garden; this year she will only sing six times; next year, in all probability, not at all. What, I would ask, may fairly be considered the probable outlook of a London operatic *impresa* bereft of its sheet-anchor—the only *cantatrice* of the day, speaking frankly, that the great paying public is unanimously desirous to listen to? Is it not a notorious fact, that but for the money taken whenever she has appeared for several

years past, the Royal Italian Opera would ere this have ceased to be? She—I should not be far wrong in saying, she alone—has brought grist to the Covent Garden mill, although her rate of remuneration, from a managerial point of view, no doubt, has been very high. But a singer, in reality, is cheap at £200 a night who can bring four times that amount into the treasury; whilst another, about whom the public does not care, is extravagantly dear at £50 a week. From these elementary calculations it may be inferred that if Adelina Patti be deducted from the sum total of Covent Garden "attractions" for the 1884 operatic season, the artistic remainder will not yield a large balance of profit to the R. I. O. Company (Limited). Italian opera has enjoyed a long lease of popularity in this country. That lease has nearly expired, in the natural course of things. Should it, by the will of the British public, be transferred to English opera, or to opera of any and every nationality, rendered in our vernacular, I, for one, shall manage to survive the change, and even to display a decent cheerfulness of demeanour. The Carl Rosa performances of the lyric drama, native or foreign, are in many respects better than those given at Covent Garden; and the English Opera Company appears to me the natural inheritor of an institution that has outlived its *raison d'être*, and exhibits significant symptoms of approaching dissolution.

Hans Richter opened his seventh "Cyklus" of orchestral concerts on Monday, May 7th, in the presence of an audience, including several members of the Royal Family, such as only the great Viennese Kapellmeister can draw together. The first part of the programme was a noble tribute of homage to Wagner's memory, consisting of a deeply interesting selection from his works, inimitably conducted and played. Especially noteworthy was the "Faust Overture," but seldom performed in this country—a mystic and deeply impressive work, in which the contrast between good and evil, and the struggles of those principles for mastery over a weak human soul, are alike forcibly and subtly described in sound. Far from being a specimen of Wagner's "endless melody" manner, it is remarkable for its strict observance of "form," whilst teeming with ingenious instrumental contrivance. It terminates with a beautiful phrase curiously resembling that with which Mendelssohn opened and closed his immortal "Mid-

summer Night's Dream" Overture. "Faust" was followed by the reverent and touching Introduction to "Parsifal," rendered in a manner above all praise. In his treatment of the "Grail Theme" (also faintly suggestive of the "Sommernachtstraum" *motiv* above alluded to) a rich display of his extraordinary fertility in contrasts and combinations of tone-quality was made by the deceased composer. It is introduced with an imposing blare of brass-trumpets and trombones, then taken up by violins *alla sordina*, then again by the full string band, treating it canon-wise and eventually receiving increment of strength from the brass quartette only, with a strange mellowness of result quite baffling description. The "Hymn of Faith," succeeding the "Grail Theme," is a sublime and profoundly affecting expression of devotional feeling. It never fails to stir the hearts of those who hear it with holy awe, or to unlock the floodgates of their tears. A more striking contrast to the sad, unearthly, sacrificial strains of "Parsifal" could not have been afforded than the sensuous passionate prelude to "Tristan and Isolde," culminating (in the Richter arrangement) in the Death Song, than which nothing more contagiously emotional exists in music. The commemorative portion of the first concert concluded with a magnificent rendering of Siegfried's Dead March (Goetterdaemmerung), probably the finest musical *résumé* of a life-drama that ever emanated from human genius.

The second Richter Concert took place on Thursday, May 10th, and the error of giving two such important musical entertainments in one week was only too convincingly demonstrated by a regretable plurality of empty seats. Works by five composers were included in the programme, the principal novelty of which was Brahms' Concerto for Violin and Orchestra (opus 77), the solo instrument being played by Adolph Brodsky, a vigorous violinist trained in the Vienna Conservatoire, and introduced to the London public last summer by Hans Richter. This Concerto, in common with all the compositions of Brahms, exhibits extraordinary constructive cleverness, and abounds in brief melodic episodes of unquestionable beauty, but is, on the whole, fatiguing to the ear by reason of the laboured elaborateness with which its themes are worked out, combined, and set off one against another. To do justice to Brahms' amazing ingenuity one is compelled to give such anxious attention to unnumbered

details of contrivance, that distress, or at at least weariness, is the inevitable result, instead of enjoyment. He is so nearly a genius, and so undeniably a great musical capacity, that his works cannot but inspire wonder and admiration, but of the sort accorded to marvels of mechanism rather than to *chefs-d'œuvre* of art. Gems of the first water are not lacking in his Concerto ; but he seems to grudge them their intrinsic brilliancy, and to joy in obscuring it by eccentric and cumbersome settings. Again, every now and then—as though conscious of this disagreeable proclivity —he strains at simplicity and only achieves tameness, *e.g.*, in the opening theme of the second movement, which, however, concludes with some very tender and touching phrases. The Concerto was ably, and, above all, powerfully played by Mr. Brodsky, who was perfectly successful in grappling with and vanquishing its tremendous technical difficulties, sometimes executed, however, at the expense of correctness of intonation. The *finale* (*allegro giocoso*) is indeed a terrible ordeal for a violinist, the solo part being in great part written in chords, the effect of which, when played well (a rare feat) in rapid succession on the fiddle, is always more or less trivial and feeble—when played badly, little less than distracting to the cultivated ear. The "Tannhäuser" Overture, supplemented by the wildly exciting "Venusberg" ballet-music, rendered with extraordinary *verve* and *furia* by Richter's glorious orchestra, and Raff's delightful "Im Walde" Symphony, constituted the remaining salient features of a concert which fully sustained the well-won reputation of leader and instrumentalists alike. Miss Orridge, whose voice and delivery have greatly improved since last I heard her, sang the famous recitative and air from Gluck's "Orfeo," "Che farò senza Euridice," very well, and was rewarded by hearty and protracted applause from an audience which atoned for its paucity of numbers by abundant appreciativeness, at once judicious and enthusiastic.

Amongst the most memorable incidents of the past month in connection with chamber-music, was the appearance on the concert-platform of M. Vladimir de Pachmann, a Russian pianist, and the début in London of Signorina Teresina Tua, a youthful Italian violinist—both artists of no common merit. In M. de Pachmann the musical world is at length fortunate enough to possess an interpreter of Chopin absolutely unrivalled amongst

contemporary executants of that gifted composer's pianoforte works. I have heard Liszt, Rubinstein, Clara Schumann, Annette Essipoff, Joséffy, and a score of other great pianists, play Chopin; but all their renderings (each excelling in some marked speciality) lacked a something which that of M. de Pachmann possesses, and which I can only designate as "Chopinesqueness," hoping to be forgiven for the barbarism. I was never so fortunate as to listen to the inimitable Frédéric himself; but I feel that he must have played his compositions exactly as M. de Pachmann plays them. Signorina Tua is a truly wonderful young lady—an accomplished musician at an unusually early age, completely mistress of all the technical resources of her instrument, a somewhat "gone-off" Amati, from which, however, she elicits tones of delicious purity and sweetness. She is, moreover, endowed with musical intelligence of a very high character and with deep feeling, as well as quick apprehensions. In the multitude of May concerts there is distraction; the space at my disposal will not allow me even to mention by name those I have attended. To one of the most interesting, from more than one point of view, I must however crave permission to particularly refer—*i.e.*, to that given on the 15th ultimo, at the Marlborough Rooms, by the talented children of Luciano Paggi, himself a flute player of no mean renown. Five of the veteran soloist's olive-branches contributed to the entertainment in question, taking part in such classical works as Beethoven's P.F. Quartette (E major) and Mendelssohn's C minor Trio, with laudable vigour and correctness, besides playing difficult solos on the 'cello and flute (Garibaldi and Anita Paggi), and giving recitations (Linda Paggi) with considerable dramatic force. Letizia Paggi, the pianiste of the family, has a firm and brilliant touch, and gave a highly intelligent reading of Chopin's Ballade in G minor. The *ensemble* playing of these clever children was uniformly meritorious, furnishing ample proof of careful study and assiduous practice.

The best songs published during the past month—at least, of those that have come under my notice—are Mr. Salaman's "Mah lách tszebíyath hén," a Hebrew love ditty, pregnant with the wild and sad character of genuine Oriental melody, and irresistibly reminding any one versed in Dacian national music of the plaintive *doïne* in which the Roumanian *laotarî*, or minstrels, so aptly

express the *dor* (love-sorrow) that inspired their poets; Mr. Randegger's graceful and coquettish "Ballata," a truly delightful composition, displaying that quaint blending of frivolity and tenderness that constitutes the chief attraction of Gordigiani's *stornelli* and Marchetti's *canzonetti popolari;* and Mr. Tozer's melodious song, "The Golden Gift," which, unless I be much mistaken, will be frequently heard in concert and drawing-rooms, to the gratification of those who prefer a simple, tuneful English ballad to the more elaborate compositions for the voice of foreign origin, which exact more attention from the listener than the latter, in this careless and lazily cynical age of ours, is inclined to accord to any "society" performance.

WILLIAM BEATTY-KINGSTON.

The World's Farewell to Richard Wagner.

FAREWELL, Great Spirit! Thou by whom alone,
Of all the Wonder-doers sent to be
My signs and sureties Time-ward, unto me
My inmost self has ceased to be unknown!
Others have been as glasses, where was shown
The fashion of my face, or where to scan
The secrets of my utmost offspring—Man—
And learn to what his worth or shame had grown;
The worship of their names has filled the sky,
Their thunder has been heard—their lightning seen,
Yet after-suns have rolled themselves on high
And still have found me with unaltered mien;
Thou only so hast dealt with me that I
Can be no more as if thou hadst not been.

ALFRED FORMAN.

Our Play-Box.

"THE MERRY DUCHESS."

An Original Comic Opera in Two Acts, by GEORGE R. SIMS and FREDERIC CLAY.
Produced at the Royalty Theatre, on Monday, April 23, 1883.

Brabazon Sikes	MR. H. ASHLEY.	The Duchess of Epsom Downs	MISS K. MUNROE.
Freddy Bowman ...	MR. W. GREGORY.	Dorothy Bowman ...	MISS ROSE.
Farmer Bowman... ...	MR. FURNEAUX COOK.	Chloe	MISS RIVIERE.
Sir Lothbury Jones ...	MR. F. KAYE.	Martin	MISS RANDALL.
Captain Walker	MR. H. HALLAM.	Sylvia	MISS DOUGLASS.
Inspector Green	MR. HOLMES.	Marian	MISS HATHERLEY.
Alderman Gog	MR. COWLRICK.	Ethelfreda	MISS LUCY WESTON.
Lord Johnnie	MR. R. MARTIN.	Rowena...	MISS KATE SANTLEY.

THE musical season of 1883 is destined to be justly memorable for the production upon the lyric stage of several purely English works, contrasting very favourably with operatic and operettic novelties of Continental origin. Last month it was my agreeable duty to point out the shining merits and chronicle the unqualified success of "Colomba" and "Esmeralda,"—each a *chef d'œuvre* of its kind—and I esteem myself fortunate in being now enabled to record another genuine triumph, achieved by an English composer well known to fame on both sides of the Atlantic. It would be difficult to pass two hours more delightfully than in listening to "The Merry Duchess." From beginning to end Mr. Frederic Clay's settings of "Dagonet's" sprightly lyrics are simply charming. Upon this little operetta he has lavished a wealth of melody that would amply fit out a brace of "grand operas" in the matter of tunes, as works of that category are now-a-days written by German, French, and even Italian composers. Mr. Clay's melodies, moreover, are not cleverly-cooked reminiscences, but original conceptions, bearing an unmistakable character of spontaneity; and the ingenious contrivances with which his concerted vocal numbers and instrumental accompaniments teem are never manifestly laboured, but convey the impression of having flowed from his pen without mental preoccupation or effort. In its exquisite finish his music always seems to me as if it could not possibly have been otherwise than it is, his mastery of the art that conceals art enabling him to mask most successfully the care and pains by which he attains what I will venture to designate as consummate completeness. His setting of the "Merry Duchess" text is perhaps too elegant and refined to suit the subject dealt with, or "hit off" the taste of the

million ; but musicians will be grateful to him for endeavouring to impart artistic tone to a trivial story, and for striving to raise operetta audiences to his own level, instead of lowering his compositions to theirs.

There is a Hawley-Smartish flavour about the plot of the "Merry Duchess"—in itself slender and transparent enough to render any intellectual effort on the part of even the "Masher" and "Johnnie" elements unnecessary for its comprehension. A fast and horsey peeress is in love with a conceited jockey, lent to her by his proprietor for the purpose of winning the St. Leger on a famous mare owned by Her Grace. To hocus "Damozel" (the mare in question) is the evil purpose of Brabazon Sikes, a broken-down "plunger," married to a former object of the jockey's affections. His devices to "get at" the favourite, involving the assumption of various disguises by himself and his wife, constitute the action of the play. They are successively defeated—in the first place by a captain of yeomanry in love with the jockey's sister (underplot), and subsequently by Sikes' better-half, a kind-hearted little creature wedded to an incorrigible scamp. After undergoing several more or less thrilling trials and adventures, Freddy Bowman wins the race, and is told off to espouse the Duchess of Epsom Downs, whose father, Sir Lothbury Jones, a stockbroking baronet, makes things comfortable for the unrepentant Sikes and his gifted spouse, through the *Deus ex machinâ* of an opportune rise in Egyptians. Impecunious Captain Walker, too, in reward for his services to "Damozel," obtains a pretty and handsomely-dowered bride ; and the operetta ends, as operettas should, by all concerned in it—including the audience—being made happy.

The performance of the "Merry Duchess" by the Royalty company is in every respect worthy of Mr. Clay's work. I can accord it no higher praise. As actress and songstress, Miss Kate Santley—to whom two admirable songs, an ample share in the concerted music, and altogether a most brilliant part has been assigned—is nothing less than fascinating. It is truly refreshing to hear such dainty and true vocalization as hers—to listen to words so articulately and archly spoken—to watch movements at once so graceful and unaffected. The singing of the tender bird-song in the first act, and of the dashing Spanish ballad in the second, was a musical treat to be remembered for

many a day. She was excellently supported throughout by Mr. Ashley, whose impersonation of Brabazon Sikes in the successive travesties of a Persian ambassador, a race-course tout, and a Spanish gipsy, was irresistibly funny, whilst absolutely free from the besetting vice of operetta drolls—vulgarity. Miss Kate Munroe's Duchess was entirely faultless. She played the part—a very grateful one—with remarkable intelligence and vivacity, and sang every note of her music to perfection. Attired in the most ravishing *costumes de fantaisie* imaginable, she looked every inch the "Merry Duchess" of Mr. Sims' libretto—a volatile patrician beauty, steeped to the soul in sport and fashion, the slave of caprice, and stable (*sans calembour*) in nothing but her resolve to have her own way. In the subordinate rôle of Dorothy Bowman, Miss Rose displayed a lovely soprano voice, thoroughly under command, and never swerving by a hair's breadth from the middle of the note. Mr. Hallam (Captain Walker) is a tenor singer of no ordinary merit, emancipated from all *ad captandum* tricks, and endowed with an organ of considerable power as well as sweetness of quality. Freddy Bowman was ably represented by Mr. Gregory, whose good looks fully justify the gay young widow-Duchess for falling irretrievably in love with him, and who sings and acts a good deal more like a gentleman than a jockey. Unqualified praise is due to Mr. Furneaux Cook for his blunt, manly, and downright "English" rendering of farmer Bowman, the fortunate Freddy's father—a sturdy agricultural Briton of the old school, eminently sympathetic to the audience. Mr. Cook's voice is as good as ever it was, and nobody could have sung his part better than he did when I heard him. In the concerted music, especially, he rendered invaluable service.

Amongst the numbers of the "Merry Duchess" that receive rapturous encores nightly, as I am credibly informed, are "The Tigers' Chorus," excellently sung by eight comely little lads dressed in the approved costume of the "cabrioly's" attendant sprite; "Love's Memories," a laughter-moving duet between Sikes and Rowena; the "Invocation to Damozel," a stately and tuneful part-song; "Love is a Fairy," a charming waltz, in which Miss Munroe's crisp and pure vocalization triumphantly asserts itself; Rowena's delicious *Ballata*, "I'm the gay Chatelaine," well deserving the triple recall it regularly elicits; and a cleverly constructed quintette, the burden of which, "Woe is me, Alhama!"

is quaintly incongruous to the subject of its text. Capital chorus singing, pretty scenery, splendid dresses and appointments, make up the "Merry Duchess's" altogether abnormal sum total of first-class attractions. W. B. K.

"FÉDORA."

A new Play in Four Acts, written by VICTORIEN SARDOU. The English version by HERMAN MERIVALE. First performed at the Haymarket Theatre, Saturday, May 5, 1883.

Loris Ipanoff	MR. CHARLES COGHLAN.	Dmitri	MISS JULIA GWYNNE.
Jean de Siriex	MR. BANCROFT.	Kirill	MR. STEWART DAWSON.
Pierre Boroff	MR. CARNE.	Ivan	MR. VERNON.
M. Rouvel	MR. SMEDLEY.	Princess Fédora Romazoff	MRS. BERNARD-BEERE.
M. Vernet	MR. H. FITZPATRICK.	Countess Olga Soukareff	MRS. BANCROFT.
Dr. Loreck	MR. ELLIOT.	Baroness Ockar	MISS HERBERT.
Gretch	MR. C. BROOKFIELD.	Madame de Tournis ...	MISS MERRILL.
Boleslas Lasinski ...	MR. FRANCIS.	Marka	MISS R. TAYLOR.
Tchileff	MR. F. EVERILL.		
Désiré	MR. GERRARD.		

THE transmutation of "Fédora" has been accomplished, with results so satisfactory to all concerned, that the piece has been at once announced for the remainder of the season.

To be sure, on the comparatively unimportant point of the mere merit of this juggle, its English judges are not quite unanimous, and those "brilliant criticisms" to which the Haymarket management have drawn such unusual attention are certainly a trifle mixed. For it has been written how "a mere adaptation from the French" may have "something of the grandeur of ancient tragedy"—how "a subject not worth a thought" may yet be "a good, almost a great play," and "reach the very highest level of dramatic energy"—how "a gust of savage passion" may be found fault with for "want of tenderness," and yet "in days of rose-water comedy" be none the less "acceptable as a novelty." On the all-important point, however—the success of Mr. Bancroft's venture—everybody is agreed.

It was a venture very promptly won; but very much of a venture notwithstanding. To talk of "Fédora" and "adaptation" in the same breath is absurd. Adaptation in the case of such a piece as this is out of the question. It must run in English on its original French lines, or not at all. No doubt "avec le ciel il y a des accommodements,"—and with prurient British prudery also. That delight of the "pschutts" in the Chaussée d'Antin, that naughty Soukareff might have her talk evaporated, her *liaisons* certified by her lovers to be only "engagements," and her lively self made "respectable" beyond impeachment—and possibility,

too, for that matter. Promptest marriage, *par devant notaire*, might condone, in the case of the heroine, an "indiscretion not yet recognized upon the English stage." And the realism of rose-pink might be eliminated from the first act, and the Sikes-and-Nancy "business" from the last ; Wladimir might be trepanned without soiling a towel, and an outraged Tartar with his hands upon a throat might leave that throat unthrottled. This much might be done, but no more could be done in the way of "adaptation." Out of the *cinquant* Parisian of Sardou which did so much to help his legerdemain, "Fédora" had to come bodily into English, which —though it need not necessarily have been such bald "dictionary" as that one sees, not without surprise, signed by the author of "The White Pilgrim"—must in the main be quite plain and uncompromising. And how, with its French gloss off it, was the public of the Haymarket likely to accept so monstrous a stage fable ?

The public was all agog to see it, at any rate. The public would have filled the house a dozen times over on the first night. The reason was not far to seek. The reason was domiciled —more or less—in Paris, Avenue de Villiers. The reason was the great Sarah. She had made so much talk in that part which is the play, that, even in a transmuted form, she was capable of making the fortune of a version in our vernacular—if such a transmutation were possible. Was it ? There was the *crux*. What English actress was to do—who could do—Fédora ?

The answering of the first question was by no means the solution of the second. The opinion of those best competent to judge, who had seen the original Sarah-Fédora—an opinion I have ventured to express already in these pages—was, that none but Sarah's self could be Fédora's parallel. That it should be so was in the nature of things. The character had been designed from, every whit as much as for, its interpreter. With its original conception the great Sarah had had no less to do than the great Sardou. Sarah, in point of fact, *was* Fédora—potentially—before a line of the part was on paper. When, as the story goes, Sardou showed Deslandes the scenario of his piece, that scenario was simply this, writ large on a sheet of foolscap :—

"LE THÉÂTRE RÉPRÉSENTE MADAME SARAH BERNHARDT."

And it was to represent Madame Bernhardt in her Fédora phase, rather than to represent Fédora by Madame Bernhardt, that the piece was written. Hence the part—a series of epileptic spasms

tempered with hysteria, through which the heroine could tragedize and tumble; and rave, and ramp, and writhe; and kiss, and curse, and cling, and clasp, and convolute—hence, the part, it was argued, was too absolutely Bernhardtesque ever to allow of Fédora being played by any other woman living.

If confirmation of this view had been necessary, it would have been afforded by the very excellence itself of Mrs. Bernard-Beere's impersonation at the Haymarket. The excellence of that impersonation took the critical portion of her audience on the first night completely by surprise, so little was it to be predicated from that "large simplicity" which has hitherto been the chief characteristic of this actress. It was a *tour de force*, this performance, such as I am not able precisely to parallel off-hand. It was the making of the piece, and the winning of the venture. But it was no more Fédora than Mrs. Bernard-Beere is Madame Bernhardt. And, wisely enough, it was never intended to be Fédora. It was, and it was intended to be, as close a rendition of Madame Bernhardt in this character as might come within the means of a highly intelligent artist, and as might suit the English stage-picture. Naturally and inevitably, it was, to some extent, an imitation. One of Mrs. Bernard-Beere's critics, who would fain have been complimentary, but whose vaulting gallantry has rather fallen o' the other side, has called it "an oleograph." It was no such machine-made matter, however. It was a *replica*, by an English hand, of a composition by the most essentially French stage-*impressioniste* in existence, executed with astonishing audacity and cleverness, and considerable fidelity; but neither claiming to be, nor aiming at being, anything more.

Nature, in fact, has not designed Mrs. Bernard-Beere for a Fédora; neither could Art, however artful, make her one. So much the better for her. For Nature has been kinder; and Art has higher claims upon this lady than the delineation of the epileptic spasm or the "flop hysteric." And I am fain, for her sake, to hope, as I believe, that her rendition of the Bernhardtesque has not placed her where I read it has—"in the very front of English actresses;" since to assert that were, by implication, to deny her capability of worthier work than this.

Howbeit, nothing succeeds like success, and the Bernhardtesque, I am bound to say, and have said, was very successful—more successful, doubtless, in such a *milieu* than a more pro-

nounced similitude of the real thing, which had, perchance, been "out of the picture." Under certain physical disadvantages for such an impersonation, indeed, Mrs. Bernard-Beere had to labour. She shares with Rosalind the distinction of being more than common tall. She must be, at any rate, I imagine, a head and shoulders taller than Madame Bernhardt; and when it comes to posturing, such extra inches must assuredly be, as they were, in the way. Then her voice—hard, grave, masculine, monotone—is not apt at *câlineries*, nor able to lend itself to those preposterously abrupt emotional transitions which belong to the part. So, though there was plenty of "cat" left in the transmuted Fédora, there was little or no "purr;" and the sameness of speech throughout was wearisome, even as was May Lilian's "gaiety without eclipse." The love scenes were consequently the least effective, and the two scenes with Gretch, especially the latter, where Fédora's tones cannot be too hard, the best rendered. But Madame Bernhardt's great effect at the end of her second act, where, after smiling upon Loris to the last, she changes—face, form, and voice—in an instant, even as the door closes upon him, from wheedling Delilah to vengeful Fury, and, wringing his kisses from her hand, electrifies her audience with the famous, "*Ah! bandit, je te tiens!*"—this effect was missed altogether on the first night. A good bit of it, though, practice will probably enable Mrs. Bernard-Beere to recover. Practice, too, and greater care in husbanding her strength, will likewise enable her to do more with her last scene than she was physically capable of doing when I witnessed it. Ten minutes before "the dropped curtain gave a glad release" she was so utterly exhausted that her plucky but unavailing struggle, under the spur, for a "finish," was painful to witness; while, from sheer physical inability to "die," she was as unconscionably long a-dying as ever was the most robustious of provincial Richards.

For a' that and a' that, it was a wonderful thing, as a whole, that performance. Not strong enough, as yet, to carry off that difficult first act, where, with next to nothing to say, Fédora has to fill the stage—where Sarah-Fédora used to be eloquent with her very elbows, and the wrigglings of her back, as she would stand peering into the death-chamber, were of themselves a revelation; but so strong in the second act and in the third, that it fluttered every Philistine of us in our Philistia, and when the

curtain fell upon success assured, was warrant for the winner to have said: "Alone I did it!"

Alone she did it, surely. The failure of Mr. Coghlan's Ipanoff was one of the most curious things—his Shylock was another—I ever saw in a theatre, and one of the most provoking. To safer hands than those of such an actor it would have appeared impossible to confide such a character. That in such hands every effect must be sure, seemed certain. That in his scenes with Fédora such an Ipanoff would do a good deal more than hold his own was quite a foregone conclusion. And then—this happened: an actor in comparison with whom Pierre Berton is an automaton, actually allowed himself to be less "in it" than even automatic Pierre aforesaid had ever been.

I say "allowed" advisedly; for Mr. Coghlan had—could not, in fact, fail to have—a perfect conception of his part; witness his account of the "difficulty" with Wladimir; the outburst over the news of his mother's death—an outburst which went unrewarded by a hand, so completely had he neglected to prepare his audience for it—and his manifestation of Tartar at the end. How, then, to account for that irritating under-play which jeopardized every other scene? I have read a suggestion as unwarrantable as it is ungenerous, and it could not well be more, which if it means anything means that this under-play of Ipanoff was intended to "let down" Fédora. It is not worth while, though it would be easy enough, to refute such a suggestion as this. Mr. Coghlan has made his proofs. His *états de service* do not date from yesterday. I take it they would amply go to show that comrade more loyal and less selfish no actress ever had. And yet it is a fact that this Ipanoff *did* "let down" his Fédora, and more than once, and very badly. The cause of this misfortune, though, was to be looked for primarily in the peculiar views an, in other respects, most clear-sighted actor, still continues to entertain on the subject of contrast and of suppressed passion. The enunciation of these views took place some eight years or so ago, when, apparently for the sake of the contrast, presently to be afforded by that one look which Shylock was to fling at the jeering audience in the judgment-hall as he made his exit, Mr. Coghlan gave us four acts of a Jew in whom passion was so severely suppressed that his gaberdine seemed to cover a cool-headed modern blood-sucker, whose proper Rialto would be a first-floor in

Jermyn Street. Apparently, too, for the sake of such a contrast, the passion which was presently to be revealed at the end of the last act, was suppressed in the Ipanoff of the second beneath an ultra-English impassibility of demeanour; and Count Loris was at first a good deal more like a Captain Darleigh, who would hold "a scene" in supremest horror, than a dangerous, if deluded, adorer, with only his cuticle between him and a barbarian. Indeed, now and again it almost seemed as though the actor had carried with him into the embodiment of his personage the sovereign contempt which the average Englishman would feel for such a personage, and that this contempt pierced through.

Other elements of misfortune were not wanting either on the first night. There was the law of acoustics—by no means the same law in Sloane Square that obtains in the Haymarket. It was soon clear that Ipanoff had not got the range of the larger house. Ominous murmurs were audible aloft. Up aloft was the Pipe-en-Bois of the locality, whose voice I never remember to have missed from a *première* here since the Bancroft rule began. Accurately timed for the critical moment of the crack scene, came one of those shrill, nasal, more than familiar, adjurations to speak up, once almost fatal to the Desmarets of Mr. Cecil, and now destructive of Delilah's spell. Alas! for once unmindful of contrast and unapt at suppression, Mr. Coghlan *did* "speak up," and so promptly, that a roar drowned his utterance, and it was all over with the crack scene.

What did not help it much either was the Concerto in progress on the far side of the folding doors—not a customary convenience, by the way, I fancy, in Paris, those same folding doors—of the Soukareff's *salon*. The *virtuosi* were naturally anxious to be heard, but this anxiety on their part rendered it no easier matter for the performers, in whom the audience were more nearly concerned, to make their duo audible.

Last, but not of least importance, Mr. Coghlan hardly made up, or dressed, his Ipanoff as the part would seem to require. Conventional "arrangements" in black and white are all very well in the case of M. Rouvel and the rest; but Ipanoff should wear his evening dress with a difference. He should discard tall collars, and abjure that white cuirass, and be something less preoccupied with his gloves. And he should be less, too, of the *gracilis puer* than Mr. Coghlan makes him, and more of a man,

and older-looking by the growth of a beard *à la* Serge Panine. So presented, and played as Mr. Coghlan could play him, he would endow the London "Fédora" with a second character.

No one could endow the piece with more. Not even the interpretation accorded to the nonentities of the bill could make characters of them. Mrs. Bancroft plays the Soukareff. What is there our Oldfield cannot play? I believe, as the Clive said of Garrick, she could "act a gridiron." Meantime, she plays this little Russ, revised, corrected, and amended, approved by the Examiner of Plays; toned down, written up, provided with the latest little gird at my Lord Randolph; very pretty, very piquante, very preposterous; with, now and then, a something about her which caused me to wonder whether the late Count Soukareff had not married into the Eccles family.

Then there was Mr. Bancroft in de Siriex, which de Siriex thus became the most amiable of men; no great diplomatist, I should say; rather a Chef d'Escadrons, who had been military attaché at Albert Gate long enough to have acquired the English fashion of standing before a fire, and the English art of imperturbability in the midst of other people's excitement. And for the sinister policeman, Gretch, there was Mr. Brookfield, who failed, somehow, to make his Gretch either sinister or policeman-like; whose moustache and whiskers were of precisely the same cut as those of the eminent solicitor facing him in the stalls; and whose most respectable frock-coat and note-book were more suggestive of an assessor of ecclesiastical dilapidations than of a sub-Nemesis of Nihilism.

I thought the Doctor better done in London than in Paris; and it is no small praise to the Dmitri of Miss Gwynne—which, by the way, the omniscient "G. A. S." confounds with the Marka of Miss Taylor—to say that it vividly recalled Mademoiselle Depoix. But my Tchileff—my dog-faced Jew jeweller—he had been transmuted out of all knowledge. Where was his accent? And why was he so much more cosmopolitan than Russian—a Berliner now, and a Wall-Streeter next moment? In the infinite deal of doing nothing that "Fédora" exacts, Mr. Smedley—who dutifully wore, I noticed, the fob-ribbon with that "large old-fashioned seal which indirectly proves the possession of ancestors"—was conspicuous as Rouvel; and the quiet, easy unconsciousness with which he accomplished the most trying, perhaps, of all stage business, is of

hopeful augury in the case of so young a stager. The palm, though, for a performance of this kind must be awarded to the Boroff of Mr. Carne. He stands, in the last act, witness to an attempted murder, and an accomplished suicide. He neither rings a bell, nor calls for aid, nor rushes for a medical practitioner, nor improvises an emetic. He does nothing ; but he does it so thoroughly well that he leaves you without the slightest doubt that nothing is the properest thing to be done. After all, perhaps he is too Russian to believe much in such tragedy. In a dispensation of Providence which would materially increase his income, the Russ of real life would certainly find no more reason for killing his wife than his wife would discover for killing herself.

On the whole, the piece has not been improved by transmutation. Its inherent impossibilities have been added to, or have become more apparent. The *ficelles* that were hidden in French are revealed in English, and stand out like cart-ropes.

What does it matter? No interpretation, however faultless —no reception, however magnificent—no criticism, however brilliant, will ever make "Fédora" a good play. But so much the worse for the good play. For nothing, either, will prevent this same "Fédora" being an uncommonly "good thing."

W. F. WALLER.

"PRINCE METHUSALEM."

A New Comic Opera in Three Acts. Produced at the Folies Dramatiques Theatre, on Saturday, May 19, 1883. Lyrics by HENRY S. LEIGH. Music by STRAUSS.

Duke Dollyfodg	MR. PHILLIP DAY.	Sophistica	MISS MADGE STAVART.
Duke Cypher	MR. FRANK WOOD.	Ulric	MISS ETHEL SORRELL.
Methusalem	MR. W. S. RISING.	Fritz	MISS IVY LAURIE.
Grunnsbach	MR. FRED DESMOND.	Carl	MISS NORTH.
Schmallbitz	MR. E. DANVERS.	Wilhelm	MISS VANCHER.
Karlitz	MDLLE. CAMILLE DUBOIS.	Franz	MISS MACKIFF.
		Heinrich	MISS LAFEUILLE.
Trombonesburg	MR. HARRY COLLIER.	Frontina	MISS MINNIE TALBOT.
Golotz	MR. F. URQUHART.	Illa	MISS KATE TALBOT.
Riber	MR. C CHRISTIE.	Teresa	MISS VALENTINE DAY.
Rosencrantz	MR. BENHAM.	Valerie	MISS CARRE.
Guldenstern...	MR. STEVENS.	Celestina	MISS IVY WOOD.
Night Watchman ...	MR. CAMPBELL.	Desiree	MISS IDA VILLER.
Christine	MDLLE. CAMILLE CLERMONT.	Katrina	MISS ROSE PATON.
		Elvina, Claudina	MISS FRANKLIN, MISS LANCASTER.
Gertrude	MISS ETHEL PIERSON.		

AFTER having undergone the *peine forte et dure* prepared for the London public, at great expenditure of money and pains, by the management of the Folies Dramatiques Theatre, on Saturday evening, May 19, 1883, I left that place of entertainment in extremely low spirits, thinking of the injunction with which a famous English humourist once summed up an elaborate recipe for

cucumber-salad—viz., "When complete, throw it out of window." What the inducement can have been that prompted Mr. Fairlie to produce "Prince Methusalem" at his new theatre it is difficult to conjecture. Not, most assuredly, the intrinsic musical merits of the work, for "Methusalem" is the weakest and dullest of all Johann Strauss's operettas, and fell flat upon Viennese audiences—always strongly predisposed in favour of the Waltz-King's compositions—when brought out at the Carl-Theater, with a cast of the best comic artists in the Kaiserstadt. Nor can it have been the attractions of the "book," for, making due exception of some graceful lyrics by Mr. H. S. Leigh, a libretto of more deadly tiresomeness has never come under my notice. Nor, one would think, can it have been the manager's deep confidence in the capacity of his company to give a superlatively excellent rendering of that particular operetta; for, but for the bright and vigorous singing of a well-trained chorus, scarcely a word of praise could honestly have been accorded to the first night's performance. Neither band nor soloists knew their parts, and both were guilty—making every allowance for the unavoidable hitches of a *première*—of inexcusable shortcomings. The operetta, moreover, in its English presentment, is far too long. An hour and a half were consumed in performing the first act. As one dreary, ill-sung, and worse-played number succeeded another, hope manifestly faded away in the breasts of the listeners, and by the end of the act the attitude of the audience left no doubt as to its condition of utter boredom. Had it not been for a noisy and injudiciously eager *claque*, hardly any applause would have been elicited by the singing or the "gag"—the latter being unusually dismal and *biré par les cheveux*. In short, it was a performance at once gloomy and painful.

The plot of "Methusalem," as that work is presented at the Folies Dramatiques, defies narration or analysis. Comic kingdoms and principalities are pretty nearly "played out" by this time; and the realms of Perhapsburg, in which the scene of action (!) is laid, would not have been esteemed funny even in the infancy of that particular *truc*. Another duchy (Rickerack) has to do with the story; but only the members of its reigning family are introduced to the audience, being at the time *en visite* at the Perhapsburg Court, for the purpose of concluding an alliance between the respective heir and heiress-apparent of both crowns.

Upon more or less vague reports, to the effect that the Rickerackians have taken advantage of their sovereign's absence to "revolute," depend the incidents of the whole piece—a somewhat slender string upon which to hang a three-act operetta. Duke Dollyfodg of Perhapsburg, whose only daughter, Christine, is to wed Prince Methusalem of Rickerack, if settlements prove satisfactory, is hospitable or the reverse to his august guests according to the varied versions of the state of affairs in Rickerack that reach him at brief intervals. That is really the whole of the story. The humour of the situations, such as it is, lies exclusively in Dollyfodg's alternations between princely profusion and revolting meanness. He (Mr. Day) and a Court-musician named Trombonesburg (Mr. Collier), whose lithe and agile grotesque dancing was an agreeable relief to the dulness of his "words," were the only two characters in the operetta who from time to time provoked a faint smile.

Vocalization is assuredly not the *forte* of any one of the "leading ladies" at present engaged at the Folies Dramatiques. All three have tolerable voices, and seem to ignore the proper method of producing them. Of all the gentlemen to whom singing parts are confided, only two have been endowed by nature with any vocal resources worth mentioning—Mr. Rising, whose light lyric tenor exhibits symptoms of premature fatigue, and Mr. Campbell, who gave out some broad sonorous tones as the Watchman in the second act. Messrs. Wood, Desmond and Danvers, respectively sustaining the rôles of Duke Cypher, Grunnsbach, and Schmallbitz, do not appear to be either musically or vocally gifted; they bore up manfully against their disabilities and the wearisomeness of the "book," but the result was by no means satisfactory.

"Prince Methusalem" has been mounted with lavish luxury. The scenery, dresses and appointments are splendid, and, for the most part, in excellent taste. Were public favour to be secured exclusively by a gorgeous *mise en scène* and pretty costumes, this operetta, as produced at the Folies-Dramatiques, might count upon a long run to crowded houses. But these attractions, even supplemented by that of a strong force of handsome girls, attired in all the colours of the rainbow, will not impart popularity to a dull work, badly played and sung, and indifferently acted. The new theatre is a comfortable little house, quietly but tastefully deco-

rated, and possessing good acoustic properties. That it should have opened with a piece that cannot possibly prove a success is unfortunate and regrettable. Let us hope that the management will be better advised with respect to its second production than it has been in relation to its first, and that "Methusalem's" successor may atone for the manifold offences of that highly objectionable work.

Three Prayers!

BENEATH a cross, beyond the town,
Before a shrine for sorrows made,
Three simple maidens knelt them down,
And from their hearts devoutly pray'd.

One, dreaming of created things—
The purple sea, the perfect sky,
Bright, happy birds with painted wings,
Glad buds that bloom before they die,
The waving woods—the scented air
Clung to her heart, and through her sighs
Was heard the gentle maiden's pray'r:
"Oh give me beauty for my prize!"

A hidden furnace seemed to glow
Within the second maiden's breast.
She heard the stirring trumpet blow,
She saw the warrior's plume and crest;
Ambition dazzled in her eyes
That life's reward—a deathless name.
Then from her heart came stifled cries:
"If I may live, oh! give me fame!"

The third fair maiden knelt apart;
Her eyes—a heaven starr'd with tears,
Her white arms folded on her heart,
She faced a mystery of years.
A sudden rapture seemed to lift
Her very soul to heav'n above
"Be mine," she pray'd, "this priceless gift:
"Let me be loved by one I love!"

C. S.

Our Omnibus-Box.

"THE critic," observes Mr. Dutton Cook in his last book, "is never a very popular person, still he has his uses." He has indeed, and the latest use of the dramatic critic is, to be placed in a peep-show, and to be exhibited at so much a head by some irreverent journalistic showman. His age, his weight, his size, the colour of his hair and his complexion, the strength or weakness of his eyes, the fashion of his coat, and the colour of his neck-tie, are supposed to be subjects of interest to readers evidently steeped in the vulgarity that encourages such purely personal details. These things cannot be helped; they are the necessary outcome of an age not distinguished for its courtesy or good taste. But the matter for astonishment is that so much pettiness, jealousy, envy, and scorn should be wasted on the representatives of a department in journalism and literature that is in reality as unenviable as any that can be cited. No one can have read recent descriptions of dramatic critics, apparently by ex-members of the fold and other sneering writers, without expressing astonishment that such persons can exist, seeing that there is no known or unknown crime or misdemeanour of which they are not supposed to be guilty. The exercise of the duties of criticism in connection with the drama is supposed by envious detractors to necessitate a breach of every moral law. Venality is considered to be part and parcel of their stock-in-trade, and there is no known insult that is not constantly heaped, both in public and private, on men who by some strange freak of ill luck have identified themselves with a branch of art that is anything but ennobling in its associations. Men, however, who have served a long apprenticeship to this disheartening and unenviable trade learn to grow callous, and to regard the attacks made upon them with the same indifference as was expressed by the coalheaver whose ears were continually boxed by his wife: "It pleases her, and it does not hurt me." Happily the public is profoundly indifferent of the trivialities and vanities that beset the theatrical calling, and express to proprietors of journals in a thousand ways their approbation of the manner in which they are served under circumstances of great anxiety and difficulty. Criticism is from time to time charged with odious crimes and misdemeanours; but the fact that no charge affecting the personal honour of any living critic has ever been justified in any degree whatever, and that, moreover, nearly every living dramatic critic has held his post with the respect of his employers for ten years at the very minimum, should go far to expose the absurdities that are published and prated at the expense of a very estimable, loyal, and honourable set of gentlemen.

Certain writers appear to assume that the critics of the daily and weekly press set themselves up as Hazlitts, Leigh Hunts, and Charles Lambs, and arrogate to themselves a position to which they are not entitled, whereas for the most part they claim for themselves nothing but a desire to do their duty and are simply industrious writers who have practised themselves

in the anxious profession of modern journalism. A popular writer has recently been at the pains to demonstrate how much "greater acumen" and "higher intellectual culture" is possessed by dramatic critics of the weekly than of the daily press. It may be so; indeed it probably is so, considering that the remark is made by one who contributes very able dramatic articles to a weekly newspaper. He surely ought to know if anyone does, though probably the remark would have come more gracefully from another pen. The public finds no fault with one or the other, and is apparently grateful for good and clever writing, whether it is published every morning or every week.

As to the gratuitous sneer at the "diurnal Aristarchuses" whom long practice has enabled to dash off a column or so of "critical verbiage" between midnight and two in the morning, it is ungenerous, no doubt, but at the same time it is a tribute of praise to clever and successful journalism. Long practice and aptitude for the work enables a leader writer to pen a valuable essay on the last night's debate in Parliament, or the last night's speech of a popular minister; long practice enables an art critic to describe with great skill the picture gallery that only opened its doors a few hours before the criticism appears in print; long practice enables the descriptive writer to pen column after column of fact and fiction after some special ceremony of great public interest. The public of to-day will not wait for its news: it expects it well and quickly done. If the so-called dramatic critic could not, after seeing a play, "dash off his column of critical verbiage" at the exact moment that the public require it, he might be relegated to the rank of the men of "acumen and higher intellectual culture," but he would prove that he was an indifferent journalist. The writer who is journalist as well as critic is necessarily more valuable to the reading public than the writer who is a critic but no journalist.

People who talk all this nonsense about first-night criticism, or whatever you choose to call it, seem to forget that the production of a new play is news; and it is news of increasing interest to the public. If the public had to wait a week before they got a review of a play, they would consider that they were paying their penny for a very indifferent newspaper. Within a few hours of the production of "Fédora" at the Haymarket, on Saturday, May 5, "columns of critical verbiage" were telegraphed to New York, and were printed on the Sunday morning on the other side of the Atlantic. It would have been strange indeed if London journalists, who had all Saturday night to think over the subject, and all Sunday to compose their articles, had not been able to write temperately and intelligently about "Fédora" on the Monday morning; and yet the criticisms in the leading journals, published a day and a night after the performance, appear to have given great offence to certain writers, who would have written quite as well, and perhaps better, had the opportunity been theirs. So long as the newspaper reading public look for columns of "critical verbiage," and buy the papers that contain them, so long will they continue to be written. When this lively interest in the stage falls off, valuable space will be devoted to more interesting matter. Newspaper criticisms are not written to please actors or journalists: they are written to interest the newspaper reading public, and presumably the

conductors of popular journals know exactly what their readers require. Those connected with the dramatic profession have no more right to dictate when or not an article shall appear in print than have editors a right to say what class of entertainment shall be performed at a particular theatre. The modern newspaper critic is a necessary result of modern journalistic enterprise. He has a very disagreeable task, and he does it conscientiously and to the best of his ability. He has to concentrate his energies, and to exhaust himself between those hours of twelve and two, in order to satisfy his employers and to please the newspaper readers next morning. When the Hazlitts and Charles Lambs, the men of acumen and higher intellectual culture, arise to do the work better than the miserable dasher off of "critical verbiage," then out will go the misguided creature whose present success, according to the rule of life, causes the greater part of his unpopularity.

Few bills have ever been submitted to Parliament that have been so obstinately misunderstood as the one brought in by Mr. Dixon Hartland for the better regulation of Theatres; and probably not Sir J. McGarel Hogg or Sir Charles Dilke, or any of the many detractors of the measure, knew at all the scope or importance of the bill. If the representatives of the Government, or of the Metropolitan Board of Works, really thought that Mr. Dixon Hartland's sole hobby was the prevention of fires in theatres alone, then they studied the Bill to very little purpose. For years and years complaints have been made of the injustice and inequality of existing theatrical legislation; of the triple authority of Chamberlains, Board of Works, and magisterial benches; of the old and vexed Ash Wednesday question; of the hardships inflicted on proprietors of music-halls; of the absence of free-trade in connection with all our amusements; of the difficulty of getting good popular music and open air concerts; of the impossibility to give anything like a good entertainment where smoking is permitted; and for years past people have been saying, "Why does not some one do something?" That something Mr. Dixon Hartland intended to do for the good of the people, and he was treated by the Government as if he were proposing the most revolutionary measure that had ever occupied the attention of the House. For after all what did Mr. Dixon Hartland propose to do? Nothing at all but what a most influential Committee of the House of Commons proposed in 1866 should be done, after taking evidence from the most experienced men of the time, from court officials, from magistrates, from actors, from managers, from literary men, and from music-hall proprietors. Sir Charles Dilke spoke of the suggestion to centralize the amusement interests at the Home Office, under a special Under Secretary of State, as the most monstrous proposal ever made. In reality it was not nearly monstrous enough. The interests are sufficiently large and varied to demand the attention of a special Government department; they are in reality too gigantic for a sub-department in the Home Office. But why this horror of centralization? Are not the mining interests centralized at the Home Office, and the factory interests as well? are not the educational interests centralized at one department, and the police interests at another? Why then should not the amusement inte-

rests have a department, and be governed on some intelligible and logical basis? There is a Minister of Public Amusements in France, so why not in England, where they are quite as varied and vast? Why should a Lord Chamberlain license one set of theatres—a bench of magistrates another? why should certain music-halls be governed by one set of laws in Middlesex, and certain others be exposed to the legislation of Surrey? why should a theatre licence be dependent on the report of the Metropolitan Board of Works, and a music-hall licence be annually threatened by bigotry and prejudice? The people have asked these questions for years, and yet when Mr. Dixon Hartland brings in a measure drafted in accordance with the recommendation of experienced men of all classes, he is regarded by the Government as if he were proposing something outrageous and unworkable. The practical Sir Charles Dilke went so far as to say that places of amusement should be even more locally administered than at present. He would probably like the Court Theatre to be licensed by the Chelsea Vestry, and the Strand Theatre to be submitted to the organization of the burgesses of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields! That indeed would be confusion worse confounded. Local busybodies have closed every public garden in London; they would soon close every theatre in the metropolis. If we are not allowed to drink a glass of ale on Sunday, we shall certainly not be permitted to see a play on Saturday night. If there is to be "local option" in drink, there will certainly be "local option" in the drama. It is satisfactory, however, to learn that Mr. Dixon Hartland, though beaten is not discouraged, and that he intends to re-introduce his measure next Session, when perhaps he will be better understood.

The Romany Amateur Dramatic Club gave their third performance this season on May 17, at St. George's Hall, in aid of the funds of the British Home for Incurables. "Our Bitterest Foe" and "Randall's Thumb" constituted the programme. But for one thing, "Randall's Thumb" was a perfect performance in all its details. Mr. and Mrs. Conyers-d'Arcy so completely lost their own identity in that of Randall and Miss Spinn that one could hardly realize they were acting. Mr. J. H. Savile and Miss Ivan Bristow were a charming young couple, and I feel sure that many a heart was captivated by the bewitching and lovely young bride. The Mr. and Mrs. Scantlebury of Mr. C. W. A. Trollope and Miss Ethel Hope were intensely humorous. Mr. Charles G. Allan proved a thoroughly sympathetic Joe Bangles. In this piece the part of the hero—for according to old rules the lover should so be considered—is one of the slightest. Mr. F. M. Staples made the most of it. There was a settled sadness on his face which fitted the part admirably. Mr. J. W. Hawkesworth was a good Dr. Trotway. He would be well advised to leave alone the part of a young lover which he sometimes takes upon himself to represent. The one flaw in the performance was the Edith Temple of Miss Annie Woodzell. This young lady is pretty, and certainly not unsuited to the stage, but unfortunately she possesses some vague resemblance to Miss Carlotta Addisson, and tries to copy her. We all know that copying a clever artiste often means catching the mannerism, not the talent, and Miss Woodzell is no exception to the

general rule. As I have already said, the lady is pretty, and it is a thousand pities to see her continually contorting her face. If she were a little less self-conscious, her delivery would gain in truth and earnestness.

At St. George's Hall, the Paulatim Amateur Dramatic Society invited their friends, on May 19, to a performance of "Our Boys." Rather a daring feat for amateurs, when the play is connected with such names as William Farren, David James, and Thomas Thorne, but the result justified the attempt. The ladies, Miss Winifred Schofield, Miss Ivan Bristow, Mrs. Viveash, and Miss Kate Kenny, deserve unqualified praise; but we should like to advise the Poor Cousin of the play to be a little less extravagant, and to wear dresses better suited to her position. The Slavey of Miss Kate Kenny was a gem. Mr. A. T. Frankish was a good Sir Geoffrey, but not quite letter perfect. The Retired Butterman of Mr. Charles C. Homan an admirable performance, with only just a little touch of exaggeration in the last act. Of Charles Middlewick as personified by Mr. W. W. A. Elkin, the less said the better; his acting was a failure, his make-up grotesque. Mr. John M. Powell as Talbot Champneys was an astonishing fac-simile of Mr. Thomas Thorne (plus youth) even to the sound of the voice. The opening farce, "To Paris and Back for Five Pounds," was played very briskly, Mr. H. S. Millward making a decided hit and reaping deserved applause. The following members also took part in the performance: Messrs. A. M. Lawrence, E. D. Beaton, A. L. Levy, B. A. Elkin, J. H. Parry, H. J. Hyam, E. H. Robson, E. Macauley, and Miss Laura Graves, and the Orpheonic Amateur Orchestra supplied the music during the entre-acts.

The last month has given us two more books for the dramatic library, which has been liberally supplied with good things of recent years. One is a collection of miscellaneous essays, called "Some London Theatres—Past and Present," by Michael Williams (London: Sampson Low & Co.). The title is a little misleading, as of the five essays here published only two deal with the London theatres as we know them now—namely, Sadler's Wells and the Lyceum. The articles on "Old Highbury Barn," on "The Drama in Norton Folgate," and "The Drama in Portman Market," are sufficiently interesting, but chiefly to the antiquary and the student of old London. Amends are, however, made with regard to the paper called "Three Lyceums," which is interesting, accurate, and exhaustive. Mr. Michael Williams promises some more chats about the London Theatres at another time; and this reminds me, whilst on this subject, that Mr. E. L. Blanchard might well republish in book form the admirable accounts he has given of the London theatres from time to time in the pages of that useful periodical, the "*Era* Almanack."

The second book is a more personal one, and contains the interesting romance connected with the life and many adventures of a very clever lady and charming actress. "The Story of Helena Modjeska," by Mabel Collins (W. H. Allen & Co.), originally appeared in the pages of *The Temple Bar Magazine*, but it was well worth republishing, and will be read with

great interest, particularly at this time, when everything in connection with stage aspirants and successful stage careers is popular. Few who have reached the top of the ladder, and have gratified a very natural ambition, ever had such a struggle of it as Helena Modjeska. The story is so romantic that it reads like a novel.

Side by side, by the way, with the bound volumes of THE THEATRE—and this reminds me that this month we complete the first half-yearly volume for 1883—should certainly be found the bound series of "Dramatic Notes," which forms a chronicle of the London stage from 1879 to 1882. This clever and interesting book looks very well indeed in its neat blue cover, and it has for its editor a clever writer and student of the stage in Mr. Austin Brereton, who, I may remind you, is now preparing for the press an admirable illustrated life of Henry Irving, a volume that, I doubt not, will be eagerly purchased in America.

Whilst on the subject of books, I may suggest to our readers that the Messrs. Routledge have recently published, in convenient form, the complete dramatic works of Sheridan Knowles; and that the same firm is getting out a very interesting dramatic series by Professor Henry Morley, commencing with Sheridan. The series is so cheap that it is within the reach of everybody.

On another page will be found the recorded impression of an able writer on the play of "Fédora," now being performed with such brilliant success at the Haymarket Theatre, and it is the more valuable as the writer has closely studied the acting and the art of Sarah Bernhardt before he saw the translated play in England. I also had an opportunity of seeing Sarah Bernhardt's "Fédora," a performance of which, to tell the truth, I was not greatly enamoured, as it seemed to me to be the most artificial, unequal, and tricky creation of an actress who, notwithstanding her faults, may be fairly said to possess genius. It is true that I did not see "Fédora" until very late in its career, and Sarah Bernhardt could not possibly have been acting as brilliantly as usual, seeing that she showed a carelessness, and occasionally a contempt for her audience, inexcusable in any artist. On going for the second time to the English "Fédora" at the Haymarket, with all the excitement of the first representation removed, and the surprise occasioned by the remarkable acting of Mrs. Bernard-Beere changed into certainty, I find that several early impressions are strengthened and some doubts very satisfactorily solved. The play does not grow upon one, and the subject does not become more appetizing. I remember well the effect it had on me in Paris. It left the mind disturbed, the spectator of it agitated. It is not a play to soothe or charm any audience. It induces feverish symptoms; it threatens headache. The whole thing is superlatively clever, no doubt, but when we watch it for the second time the story has no longer any hold upon us, and the mind is solely occupied in studying and deciphering the art of the actors. Of course there are hundreds of people who go to the play for the play, and nothing but the play, on whom the most brilliant acting in the world is altogether wasted. They identify an actor or actress so much with the part

they enact that they would consider Mr. Henry Irving an uncomfortable actor because he appears as Mathias in "The Bells," and declare "they do not like Mrs. Bernard-Beere" simply because she appears as the Princess Romazoff at the Haymarket. What they mean is, that they do not sympathize with the characters of the Burgomaster and of Fédora. They cannot disassociate the artists from their work. This strange susceptibility is not at all unusual when plays are discussed by laymen.

Of Mrs. Bernard-Beere's talent there can be no possible doubt. Brilliantly as she played Fédora on the first night, in the teeth of difficulties that would have paralyzed and prostrated any one with less vigour of determination, she certainly plays it far better now—with greater strength, greater command, and far more variety. It is the sudden reaction from under-colour and namby-pambyism in art that makes Mrs. Beere's performances so remarkable. In all that she does there is a dramatic ring; she never allows her audience to slip away from her grasp; she catches them, and holds them fast. There is command in her voice as well as in her stature; she paints-in her effects with a strong bold hand; and, if I mistake not, such an example as this, whether it be inspired by Sarah Bernhardt or not, will make the actresses of the day "play up" whenever they get a chance. There has been too much shilly-shallying of late, too much attitudinizing and waving of hands and arms, too much posing and posturing, and calling it art. Powerful scenes have been deluged with milk-and-water, and we have been asked to value the unsatisfactory result as a new reading. It was nothing of the kind. Of what use would it have been to give us a low-toned, under-coloured Fédora, a creature of an age of sham æstheticism and sunflower art? It would have been very pretty, very charming, very graceful, and so on; but it would not have been Fédora. Mrs. Bernard-Beere, who was educated in the school of straight gowns and Christmas-card effects, could have given us, no doubt, an idyllic Fédora, had she no power to show; but, having power, she can play Fédora, and could have played it remarkably well, had she never set eyes on Sarah Bernhardt. I do not say it would have been so good a performance as it is; but it would have been a Fédora with all the dramatic power that the new actress possesses.

It must not be forgotten that Mrs. Bernard-Beere showed this same power when very indifferently supported in "Jane Eyre," and it was probably "Jane Eyre" that induced Mr. Bancroft to see a probable Fédora in this young and ambitious actress. There was one scene in "Jane Eyre" played with such strength, and that rang so true, that it was impossible to put it down as an accidental effort. The germ of the lady's talent lay there. It was discovered, accepted, tested, and proved *voilà tout!* On studying the new "Fédora" for the second time, I cannot agree with the often expressed opinion that there are monotony and hardness in the style of the actress. I can find no trace of either. The love scenes in the second act are very much improved indeed, they are softer, more natural, and more womanly, and of course they are naturally strengthened by the welcome change that has come over Mr. Coghlan as Loris Ipanoff, the tenor singer in this duet of art. He plays the part infinitely better than Pierre Berton ever did at any time, with more restraint and force, in some scenes with

real brilliance. But still I cannot understand why Mr. Coghlan, with evident intention, represses all fervour in his love-making. Surely in the second act the man's distracted condition should be more obvious than it is? The man as we see him is "high, self-contained, and passionless," but this must be wrong. Loris Ipanoff is a Lancelot, not a King Arthur. His love overflows, it is not pent up and hoarded. The almost obstinate refusal of the lover to embrace the woman he loves is very remarkable. Not even when Ipanoff and Fédora are comfortably married—according to the English version—does Loris allow himself the natural privilege of a kiss—and there are frequent opportunities for it. It is a clever, strong, but unbending performance. I need not say that admirable assistance is given to this gloomy tale by Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft; and amongst the small parts nothing could be better than the acting of Mr. Gerard as the servant, and Mr. Elliott as the doctor. This last is truly excellent.

A correspondent writes to me :—"Quite the most absurd forms of blind Shakspearean idolatry I have met with for many a long day is hatched by that dear old owl *The Athenæum*, in its article of April the 28th. Read the article, by Christian D. Ginsburg, on "Shakspeare's use of the Bible," and see how "this marvellous moral philosopher" has drawn from Holy Writ "familiar materials, which he converted in his own matchless way both into rods to punish sin and garlands to crown virtue." Here are all Ginsburg's "rods and garlands." (1.) He quotes Shylock's somewhat questionable narrative concerning Jacob's agricultural dealings with his uncle Laban; and to prove that Shakspeare was "one of the most original interpreters of the Bible," he makes two criticisms on the passage; that "Jacob was selected" (by Shakspeare) "because his additional name was Israel, the name by which Shylock and his race obtained the name Israelites" (as if the Bard deserved special credit for not saying that "*Esau* grazed his uncle Laban's sheep"); and makes a second beautiful point in noting that the words "the devil can cite Scripture for his purpose," that Irving used to give so quaintly, are spoken to Bassanio, because the fact is recorded in Matthew iv. 6, and Shylock does not believe in the New Testament! (2.) Shakspeare has, "without being acquainted with the language of the Talmud," solved the whole vexed question of the camel and the needle's eye, because he quotes it "with the true genius of a great poet" in Richard II., and treats it as a proverb, without reference to the "cable" explanation or the "small gate of a city" explanation. What Shakspeare wrote was, "to thread *the postern* of a needle's eye," and this has, at all events, some mixture of the gate theory in it. But (3) Ginsburg soars vastly higher than this, and says that Shakspeare often got at "the true sense, when all the English versions of the Bible" (and he enumerates eight) "had positively mistranslated it." This somewhat takes one's breath away, but Ginsburg haps on a passage in Henry VI. :—

> "To keep that oath were more impiety
> Than Jephthath's when he sacrificed his daughter."

and on the strength of it shows that "the infallible decipherer of human thought" saw that Jephthah's vow related to human sacrifice, and that

"Judges xi. 30–40" is all wrong, and so he boldly corrects *all* all the versions of the Bible from 1525 to 1882, in accordance with the "keen insight of Shakspeare as an interpreter of Holy Writ." (4.) Ginsburg gushes over Shakspeare's "humorous use of the Bible," and this is an example. The dialogue between the Provost and Clown in "Measure for Measure" contains this passage :

PROV. Can you cut off a man's head ?

CLOWN. If the man be a bachelor, sir, I can ; but if he is a married man he is his wife's head, and I can never cut off a woman's head.

This is (*teste* Ginsburg) "a humorous use of the apostle's declaration in Eph. v. 23 !" So this solemn bosh runs on for four columns, and because I love my Shakspeare I protest against this sort of nauseous twaddle. I recommend Ginsburg to read W. S. Gilbert's notes to a "Bab Ballad" called "An Unfortunate Likeness,"—a brilliant *reductio ad absurdum* of the views of the school that invest the Bard with a smattering of omniscience. Why do Owls insist upon flying about in the daylight of common sense?

The Park Lane Amateur Musical Society gave their usual monthly concert on the 9th of May. The gathering was brilliant and the music excellent. The principal feature of the evening was the admirable rendering of the grand aria from "Semiramide," by Mrs. Chatteris. Mrs. Inez Bell's rich low notes told with good effect, and Major Brooke Meares made a decided hit in Hamilton Aïdé's whistling song. Music was not the only element. Captain Evatt Acklom gave a recitation, and moved many to tears by his earnest and manly delivery of "A Voice from the Bush."

An amateur performance was given on Saturday, May 12, at St. George's Hall, in aid of the Victoria Hospital for Sick Children, and the St. Jude's Industrial Home, Chelsea. Mrs. Clare Royse, the originator and general manager of the entertainment, must be congratulated on a decided success. It is easy enough for members of dramatic clubs who are always acting together to turn out good work. But when amateurs are brought together for the first time, some of them never having stepped on the stage before, it is very creditable to them that there should have been so few hitches and waits, and that the performance should have run so smoothly One of the actors showed himself to be a little inexperienced in the ways and manners of stage doors by expecting one to open inwards, and so astonished the unfortunate door as to quite unhinge it. But this was merely an amusing incident, and only called forth a round of applause. The opening piece was "Dearest Mamma." The clever get-up and humorous rendering of the title rôle by Mrs. Clare Royse met with deserved applause ; Miss Szulczewska looked the pretty young bride to the life ; Mr. Louis Delacherois was a good but rather too highly-coloured Browser ; Captain C. F. Ibbetson was thoroughly at home on the boards ; and Miss Page Henderson, Mr. F. Gielgud, and Mr. Malcom Wagner did good service in their respective parts. This was followed by Savile Clarke and Du Terreaux's "Love Wins." Miss Hester was a graceful and sympathetic Netta ; the Hon. Andalusia Molesworth a sprightly and natural Dolly,

but a trifle more repose would have added charm to the part. Captain Walter James, as Professor Lobelia, the seedy Circus master, treated his audience to such a clever study of character acting, as one seldom finds in amateurs, he was quite *dans la peau de son rôle*. Mr. F. B. Wyatt was a good Tom Leverton. Mr. H. Palmer as Reginald Dalton was better in the first act than in the last, which flagged a bit. Mr. Hawksworth (a strolling player) as Arthur Dalton, acted carefully, but with a marked want of earnestness. Mrs. Clare Royse did all that could be done for the unimportant part of Mrs. Hurst; and Mr. Malcom Wagner made a success of the trifling rôle of Garcia, the picture dealer. The talented young painter Mr. Machel, kindly superintended the arrangement of the pictures in the last act, and even went so far as to paint *the* picture of the play especially for the occasion. Mr. T. Hilton Crampton was the stage manager, and Mr. Norfolk Megone's excellent amateur orchestra enlivened the entre-actes with pleasant music. The hall was crowded, and we hope the performance was as much of a success from a pecuniary point of view as it was to the spectators.

On Tuesday, May 15, the St. Peter's Schools, Lower Belgrave Street, were favoured by the following artistes and amateurs, brought together by Mrs. Szulczewska in aid of the St. Peter's Football Club:—Mrs, Chatteris, Mrs. Clare Royse, Mrs. Davidson, Mrs. Inez Bell, Mr. Tietkens, Major Brooke Meares, Mr. C. Traherne, Mr. Ernest Cecil, General Cracroft, Mr. William Young. The ladies one and all delighted their audience; but it was a pity that the violin obligato in "Stella confidente" (from want of rehearsal, I suppose) should have spoilt the solo of that most charming of amateurs, Mrs. Davidson. Among the gentlemen the palm must be given to Major Brooke Meares, and next to Messrs. C. Traherne and Ernest Cecil, whose duets are quite a speciality.

The month of May opened in Liverpool with a deluge of amateur performances. Opera and drama had alike their votaries. At the Prince of Wales's Theatre certain prominent amateurs—the cream of the local clubs—gave two performances in aid of the rebuilding fund of the Royal Infirmary, and cleared something like £120 by their exertions over two nights' performances. The pieces played were "The Two Roses," and "The Parvenu" respectively, preceded each evening by a new farce of J. Maddison Morton's, entitled "A Narrow Squeak." Both comedies were admirably played, and afforded unqualified enjoyment to the large and fashionable audience before whom they were presented. In "The Two Roses" Mr. W. H. Fraser outshone his companions somewhat in his impersonation of Caleb Deecie, which was remarkable for easy grace of bearing and a keen appreciation of the bright sparkling wit of Mr. Albery's dialogue. Mr. F. M. Radcliffe gave a scholarly rendering of Digby Grant, but was unable to impart to the character the variety of light and shade essential to its perfect realization. A local legal luminary, Mr. Stone, was admirably fitted with the character of Furnival; and Mr. J. M. Walker was pleasing, though a trifle heavy and monotonous, as Jack Wyatt. Our

Mr. Jenkins found a droll impersonator in Mr. Frank Leslie. The amateurs very wisely relied for assistance on professional ladies, and were very happy in their selection, especially in the case of Miss Nellie Murray, who played Lottie with rare charm and delightful ingenuousness. Miss Lottie Pitt was bright and pleasant as Ida; and Mrs. Bright—though somewhat unsuited to the part—was acceptable as Our Mrs. Jenkins. The second evening's performance, when "The Parvenu" formed the *pièce de résistance*, was even more successful than its predecessor, the amateurs entrusted with the various characters being individually more artistic, and playing together with a skill not unworthy of a professional company. Mr. Charles L. Cameron as Mr. Ledger was especially worthy of all praise for a careful yet strongly marked piece of genuine characterization. Messrs. J. S. Rogers, W. J. Stewart, and J. Barr Adams, played Sir Fulke Pettigrew, Tracey, and Claude respectively, and one and all received hearty appreciation from the audience. Again the ladies lent a powerful attraction to the performance. Mrs. Bright—better suited than on the preceding evening—was admirable as Lady Pettigrew, and Miss Lottie Pitt looked pretty as Gwendolen, though a lack of repose somewhat detracted from anything like the ideal character being realized. Molly Ledger had a most charming representative in Miss Nellie Murray, who not only looked well but presented with perfect art all the phases of the character. A farce by Maddison Morton was well played by the amateurs; but did not seem to hit the fancy of the audience in any marked manner.

The Liverpool Amateur Operatic Society gave a performance of "Trial by Jury" during the latter part of April in the Meyerbeer Hall, and scored a success. Mr. C. Alexander was the Judge, Mr. C. J. O'Byrne the Defendant, Mr. W. H. Allan the Counsel, and Mr. R. A. Robinson the Usher. The Plaintiff, in Miss Byer's hands, was an exceedingly graceful presentation, equally acceptable from a dramatic and vocal standpoint. More than a word of praise is due to Miss Scott, whose dramatic instincts and brilliant executive abilities made the pianoforte accompaniments quite a distinctive feature of the performance.

Another local operatic society—the Rock Ferry Amateurs—gave performances on the 30th of April and 1st of May, at the Tranmere Music Hall, when "The Pirates of Penzance" formed the programme. Last year this company gave a very excellent rendering of "Pinafore," so much was expected of their second effort. That they were successful beyond all expectation is perhaps as great a compliment as can be passed to them. Principals and chorus alike worked hard to secure a smooth and artistic ensemble. The parts were distributed as follows:—Frederick, Mr. W. Cunliffe; Major-General Stanley, Mr. Oakshott; the Pirate King, Mr. Wilkinson; Lieutenant, Mr. Sonnison; Mabel, Miss Palin; and Ruth, Miss E. Dean.

Professional art has been represented during the month by "La Mascotte," J. L. Shine's company in the "Glass of Fashion," "Don Juan, Junr," "Ensnared," "Pluck," Lila Clay's troupe of Ladies, "London Pride," &c.

A new comedietta, "A May Tempest," by Walter Frith, was produced at the Court Theatre on the 4th of May, with success. It is a brightly written trifle, and is quite an acceptable addition to the ranks of works of its class.

On the 3rd of May a new and original opera, in three acts, entitled "Foxglove," was produced at the Prince of Wales's Theatre. The libretto is by Charles Dyall, Curator of the Art Gallery, and the music by Dr. G. W. Rohner, both gentlemen of local note. Mr. Dyall's lyrics are easy and graceful, flowing on in unstrained pleasing rhythm, and indicating a quiet appreciation of the mildly humorous. The music it is easy to speak well of, for it is written with an unvarying attention to the canons of art, but this very correctness entails considerable monotony, and gives the piece but a poor chance of popular success. It was played by a semi-amateur company in a not too satisfactory manner, and although well received by a crowded audience, is not, I fancy, likely to be heard of again.

The following notes from America will be read with interest by all playgoers :—

The retirement of Mr. A. M. Palmer from the management of the Union Square Theatre has created a sensation in New York theatrical circles. Under his sagacious direction the company of that house attained a high status; and although his policy differed materially from that of Mr. Augustus Daly, who has "produced" not a few valuable actors and actresses from mere neophytes or raw provincial recruits, yet it must not be forgotten that the late Charles R. Thorne, jun., had his robust style refined and polished during his connection with Mr. Palmer's theatre; that Miss Sara Jewett, Miss Linda Deitz, and Miss Kate Claxton (all originally of Daly's) there found their best opportunities; and that one of the most charming of American actresses, Miss Maude Harrison, was "discovered" and developed at the Union Square. The production of Sardou's "Daniel Rochat," and of other high-class plays; the admirable acting of Mr. Charles Coghlan in many comedies; notable versions of "Montjoye" and "Séraphine;" Miss Agnes Ethel's success in Sardou's "Agnes," and "Andréa," written specially for her; and Clara Morris's triumphs as Miss Malton; not to speak of the many hits made by the late Charles R. Thorne, jun., and Mr. J. H. Stoddart, a most original and skilful actor — these are some of the red-letter memories of Mr. Palmer's reign. It can scarcely be doubted that he will again come forward as a New York stage-manager.

A drama, of which New York playgoers are at last beginning to tire, "Camille" (known here as "Heartsease"), was chosen by Mdlle. Etelka Borry, a Hungarian actress of unmistakable Jewish descent, for her New York début early in May; but she signally failed to attain the impression made in the same part by Madame Modjeska and Mdlle. Eugenie Legrand, who are both finished exponents of the same school. The support, moreover, was unanimously pronounced wretched.

Mrs. Lawrence Barrett, wife of the American tragedian, who is to appear at the Lyceum Theatre on Easter Monday of next year, has passed

MRS. STIRLING.

'A true gentleman should not only be without fear,
but without reproach.'

—CASTE.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN SPECIALLY FOR 'THE THEATRE' BY
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through London on her way to Stüttgart, where her eldest daughter is to be married next month to a German Baron. Mr. Lawrence Barrett, who has been playing in California, will arrive from the United States in time to be present at the ceremony.

Amongst American actors now in London are—Mr. Joseph Haworth, formerly of the Boston Museum, of which Mr. William Warren is the celebrated *doyen*, and, more recently, Mr. John McCullough's leading man; and Mr. Clinton Stuart, formerly of the Union Square Theatre, and late of Booth's Theatre company, who has returned to town after an absence of nearly two years in the States. Miss Georgia Cayvan, now leading lady of the Union Square, Miss Kate Forsyth, Mr. McCullough's leading lady, Mr. John L. Raymond, and Mr. Henry Lee, will arrive from New York this month.

"The Silver King" has been succeeded at Wallack's by what has proved one of the most attractive programmes of the year, "The Cape Mail" and "The Snowball;" and in the transitions from grave to gay, Miss Rose Coghlan takes high honours. Mr. H. M. Pitt's comedy season at the Bijou Theatre opposite, has proved unexpectedly attractive. "Caste" has now been followed by the "Two Roses;" Mr. Pitt's Digby Grant is, however, scarcely so successful as was his Captain Hawtree.

Our portraits this month represent Mrs. Stirling and Mr. William Terriss. For a memoir of Mr. Terriss I refer our readers to the article by "An Old Play-Goer," in THE THEATRE for December last. Mrs. Stirling (Miss Fanny Clifton) was born in London, in July, 1816, and made her first histrionic essay at the Coburg Theatre. She afterwards appeared at the Pavilion Theatre, in a round of various characters. On January 1, 1836, she acted Biddy Nutts, in "The Dream at Sea," at the Adelphi Theatre, and during the same month she played in a drama entitled "The Ghost Story." During the following season, at the same theatre, she played in "Luke Somerton," "The Demon of Marana," "Catching an Heiress," and other plays. In May, 1836, she took the leading character in a burletta entitled "Love and Charity," produced at the St. James's Theatre. In November 1839, at Drury Lane Theatre, she sustained the part of Beatrice in a revival of "Much Ado About Nothing"; and the same year, at the same theatre, the leading female rôle in a piece entitled "A Night in the Bastile." The year following she took the place of Miss Faucit at the Haymarket Theatre as Clara Douglas in "Money;" and in 1841, at the same theatre, sustained Mrs. Glover's character of Mrs. Franklin in the same play. During Mr. Macready's second season at Drury Lane, October 1842, she appeared there as Celia in "As You Like It," as Sophia in Holcroft's "Road to Ruin," and as Mrs. Foresight in Congreve's "Love for Love." She also acted with great spirit with Charles Mathews the younger in a farce written by him under the title of "The Eton Boy." In 1845 she joined the company at the Princess's Theatre, and appeared there with Mr. Macready, Mr. Wallack, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Matthews, Mr. Compton, and Mrs. Ternan, in several plays produced under Mr. Macready's superin-

tendence. She acted at the same theatre with Miss Cushman during the first visit of that accomplished actress to England, on April 19, 1845, appearing as Helen (to Miss Cushman's Julia) in "The Hunchback." Wednesday, October 15, 1845, at the same theatre, she sustained the part of Cordelia ("King Lear"), with Mr. Macready in the leading rôle. The following year, Wednesday, May 20, she acted the character of Madeline Weir, in first performance of "The King of the Commons," the part of James V. of Scotland being undertaken by Macready. In 1847, Tuesday, December 7, she took part in the special Shakspearean performances at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, arranged in behalf of the fund for the purchase of Shakspeare's house at Stratford-on-Avon. She played on this occasion Mrs. Ford in a selection from "The Merry Wives of Windsor" (Act 3, Scs. 3 and 4; Act 4, Sc. 2). In 1848, she joined the company of the Olympic Theatre, and appeared there, September 4, as Laura Leeson in "Time Tries All," then performed for the first time. This, according to a contemporary journal, was Mrs. Stirling's first appearance on these boards, and she was received with a "high welcome" which she merited by her able tracings of the finer shades of the part. "No character could well be better suited to Mrs. Stirling's style than that of a fantastic maiden, who, mistaking the bias of her own feelings, banishes from her presence and his country the man whom she really loves. The drama is one in which the interest is mental, and sustained by the heroine." The same year (1848), at the Olympic, she appeared as Juliana in "The Honeymoon," Kate in "The Taming of the Shrew," and, with distinguished success, as Cousin Cherry in the farce of that title.

After the destruction by fire of the Olympic (March 29, 1849), Mrs. Stirling accepted an engagement atthe new Strand Theatre, under Mr. Henry Farren's management. On October 10 she played there the leading rôle in "The Reigning Favourite," a piece translated by Mr. John Oxenford from Scribe's tragedy of "Adrienne Lecouvreur." The same year Mrs. Stirling appeared as the heroine in Mr. Theodore Martin's version of "King René's Daughter," and as Olivia in a version by Tom Taylor of "The Vicar of Wakefield." In 1850, October 14, at the Olympic, she sustained the principal rôle in Stirling Coyne's "My Wife's Daughter," a version of "La Femme de Quarante Ans." Monday, January 13, 1851, at the same theatre, she played the part of Martha Gibbs in "All that Glitters is not Gold." The following April, in a dramatic version of Addison's "Sir Roger de Coverley," produced at the Olympic, Mrs. Stirling undertook the part of the Widow. The piece, though interesting, was not successful. After fulfilling a short engagement at the Olympic Theatre, she returned to the Haymarket, and reappeared there, April 21, 1852, as Fanny, in the first performance of Mark Lemon's play, "Mind Your Own Business." On Saturday, November 20, 1852, first performance at the Haymarket Theatre of "Masks and Faces," Mrs. Stirling played the part of Peg Woffington.

Mrs. Stirling was the original Mrs. Trotter Southdown in Taylor's comedy

"To Oblige Benson," first performed at the Olympic, Monday, March 6, 1854. This piece was an adaptation of "Un Service à Blanchard," by MM. Moreau and Delacour. Among other characters assumed by Mrs. Stirling during her long connection with the Olympic the following are deserving of being specially mentioned—viz., Lady Teazle (June 22, 1855); Mrs. Bracegirdle, in the comedietta of "The Tragedy Queen" (May, 1856); Miss Dorrillon, in Mrs. Inchbald's comedy "Wives as they Were and Maids as they Are" (the same month); Mrs. Levenson, in Mr. A. C. Troughton's "Leading Strings" (first performed October 19, 1857). In February, 1857, at the Lyceum Theatre, Mrs. Stirling played the leading female rôle, first performance of Mr. Tom Taylor's play "A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing," an adaptation of Madame Girardin's "Une Femme qui déteste son Mari." At the Olympic, in October, 1858, in a melodrama by Mr. Wilkie Collins, entitled "The Red Vial," Mrs. Stirling sustained the part of Madame Bergmann.

Since 1858 Mrs. Stirling has appeared mostly in the position of a star actress in characters in which she had already secured fame. In the spring of 1869 she gave her first dramatic reading in London, consisting of selections from the "Midsummer Night's Dream." She then occupied herself principally with this work, and with her duties as Professor of Elocution at the London Academy of Music, but in 1879 returned to the stage, and appeared in Miss Litton's series of revivals of old plays at the Imperial Theatre, acting Mrs. Hardcastle in "She Stoops to Conquer," Lady Bountiful in "The Beaux Stratagem," and Miss Lucretia MacTab in "The Poor Gentleman." In May, 1880, at the Haymarket Theatre, she played Mrs. Malaprop in "The Rivals," and in Mr. Henry Irving's revival of "Romeo and Juliet" at the Lyceum on March 8, 1882, she acted the Nurse. In December last she appeared as Mrs. Malaprop at the Vaudeville Theatre, where she has again resumed that character, after impersonating the Marquise in the recent revival of "Caste" at the Haymarket Theatre.

If the whole series of Mr. Henry Irving's farewell performances before sailing for America be as admirable as that of "The Bells," then the months of June and July, 1883, will be memorable in dramatic annals. That play has never before been performed with such finish and completeness: the actor at no time in his career has shown such a complete mastery of his audience. It is literally true that the story of the down-hearted Burgomaster is followed with an interest it never excited before, and Mr. Irving's Mathias in conception and detail is a vastly better performance than it was when first shown, on Saturday, November 25, 1871. The eagerness to be present at the remaining plays to be performed in London in anticipation of America is naturally very great indeed. "The Lyons Mail" comes next, and will be quickly followed by "Charles the First," "Hamlet," "The Merchant of Venice," "Eugene Aram," and "The Belle's Stratagem." These revivals will divide with the French plays the interest of the summer theatrical season. Our merry friend, *Punch*, has treated

"The Bells" rhythmically, and concludes the story of the play with the following suggestive thoughts, that will be cordially appreciated :—

> "And when the curtain has rung down, and all the play is o'er,
> The memory of that night, methinks, will live for evermore.
> We see the actor's earnest face, his agony supreme,
> That thrills us through and through, and holds us breathless in the dream ;
> While in our ears for many a day thereafter certes dwells
> The tintinnabulation of those well-remembered Bells !"

Elliston—the "Great Lessee," had a curious fondness for small by-enterprises, and was actually, to the date of his schedule in bankruptcy, a "licensed dealer and chapman" at Leamington—Elliston once had the Worcester Theatre. There, on the occasion of his benefit, he announced that "a magnificent display of fireworks" would conclude the evening's entertainment ; which display, when the play had been played, and the farce finished, a crowded audience presently awaited, with an impatience which John Crisp, the unfortunate stage manager, was perfectly powerless to mitigate—the pyrotechny to be displayed existing only in the vivid imagination of his chief. At last, when the yells had become terrific, and nothing less than a demolition row had to be looked for, Robert William blandly appeared before the curtain. A deprecatory wave of his white hand secured him silence. Then he said : "Ladies and gentlemen, I have ready for your amusement a most splendid—*the* most splendid—pyrotechnic exhibition ever beheld in this or any other town in the kingdom."

Tremendous cheers came in here. The lessee bowed, as sublimely conscious that he had deserved them. "But," he went on, "but, ladies and gentlemen, it is my duty to inform you that, if the fireworks be exhibited, my engineer"—was there ever a more delightful touch than "my engineer ?" —"is of opinion that they will *positively blow the roof off the theatre*, such is their strength and magnitude." Here the audience began to move uneasily.

"However, ladies and gentlemen, *you shall have them !*" There was a general rising up at this, and cries of "No, no, Mr. Elliston."

"I have never deceived you, my dear patrons," the lessee continued, "*and you shall certainly have them !* My stage-manager, Mr. Crisp—there he is in my private box—will fully corroborate what I say. The fireworks will absolutely blow the roof off the theatre. *But you shall have them !*"

By this time a decided move in the direction of the street had set in ; and it only needed a reiteration of Robert William's threat that "they should have them" to send his panic-stricken patrons stampeding from the house, all crying out with one accord, "No, no, no, Mr. Elliston, no fireworks !" "Ladies and gentlemen," he said, in conclusion, "I am happy to say I have made arrangements that will in some way make up for your disappointment—THE BAND" (which consisted of three wretched fiddlers) "will strike up 'God Save the King.'"

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